



**100**  
Delicious  
& Nutritious  
One-Pan  
Recipes  
You Can  
Make Right  
Now!

**Men'sHealth**

# A Man, A Pan, A Plan



**PAUL KITA**  
Food &  
Nutrition  
Editor,  
Men's  
Health



**ALSO BY PAUL KITA  
GUY GOURMET:  
GREAT CHEFS' AMAZING MEALS  
FOR A LEAN & HEALTHY BODY  
(WITH ADINA STEIMAN)**

**100**  
**Delicious & Nutritious**  
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# A Man, A Pan, A Plan

**PAUL KITA**  
Food & Nutrition Editor,  
*Men's Health*

  
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# INTRODUCTION

»————→ If you're reading this, thank you. First off, only truly dedicated (or bored!) cookbook readers ever turn to the introduction. But secondly, and most importantly, it means that you care enough about what you're eating to purchase, or seriously consider purchasing, this book.

You may not feel this way, but consider yourself lucky. Too many people don't think about what they consume on a daily basis. Too many people think that cooking is "too hard" or "not worth the trouble." Too many people see the supermarket as a place to pick up premade meals instead of choosing to make healthy choices. Too many people have given up control of their diets. And, in doing so, they've missed out on the comfort, satisfaction, pride, wonder, and glory of cooking for themselves and the people they love—not to mention reaping the benefit of eating home-cooked food as compared to, say, a Salisbury steak TV dinner.

But you, you're one of the special ones. You know that cooking empowers you. You know that choosing to decide exactly what goes into your body is a delicious form of self-care. You know that under the right conditions, with a little practice, cooking isn't hard or inconvenient. It is even, more often than not, really fun.

And that's what *A Man, A Pan, A Plan* is ultimately all about: fun. You're not going to find any convoluted multiday recipes in this book. You're not going to have to search the ends of the planet to source specialty ingredients. You're not going to find any precious recipe notes about the golden days in provincial France. What you will find, though, is plenty of practical advice and straightforward recipes that involve tools you already own, resulting in meals you'll immediately place among your favorites. By cooking meals in one pan, you'll save stress, prevent mess, and reduce your chances of culinary distress.

Cooking is a lot like building a birdhouse. With the right equipment, a smart set of plans, and some ambition, you can make something beautiful. Is there a possibility of screwing up somewhere along the way? Sure. But that's part of the learning process.

The big difference between carpentry and cooking—and perhaps cooking's greatest advantage—is that you get to eat the birdhouse.

**Paul Kita**

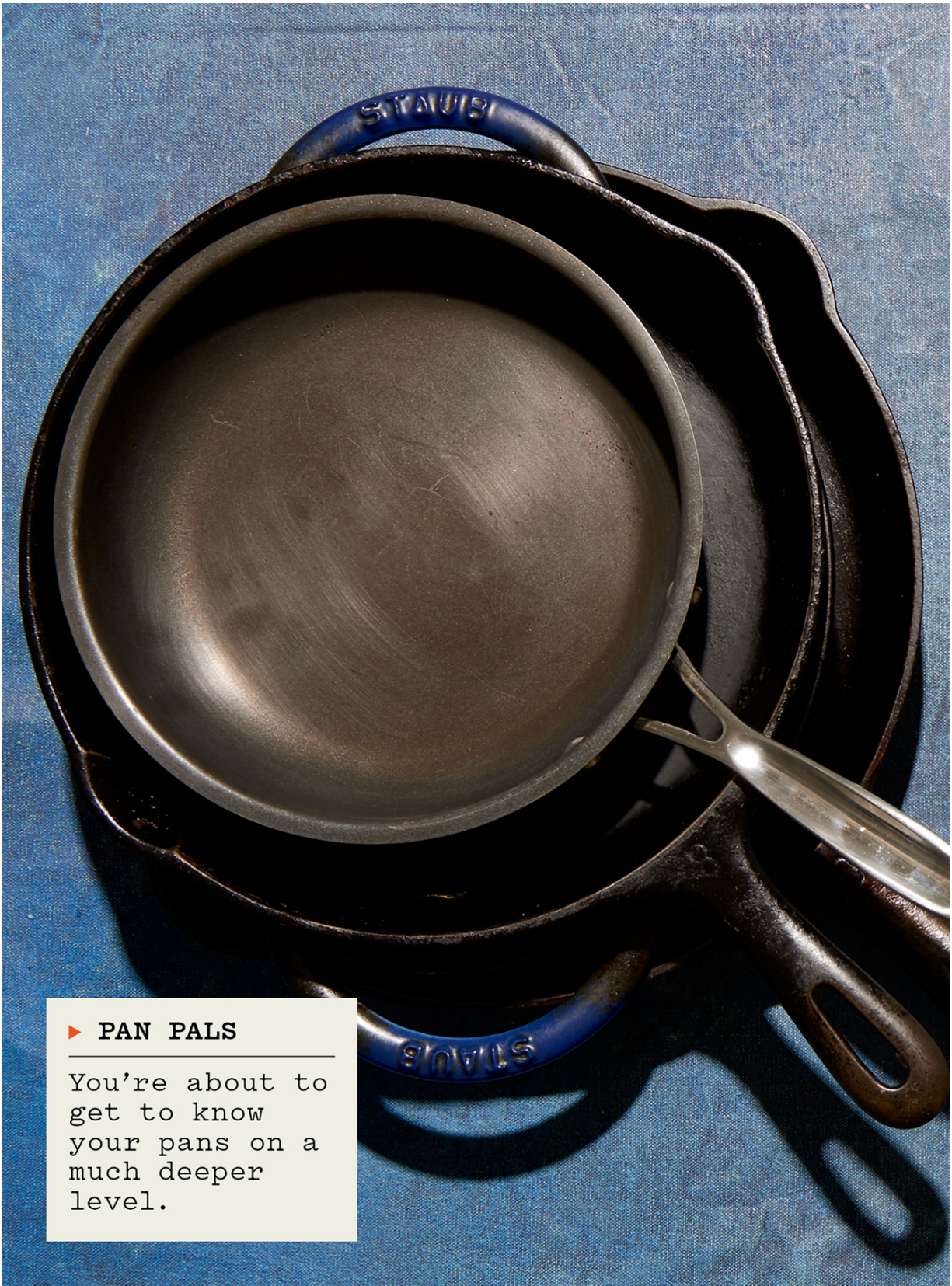
*Allentown, PA*  
*April 2017*



# THE HARDWARE

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Before you can eat, you must cook. Before you can cook, you must assemble the necessary tools and learn how to use them effectively. Despite what fancy-pants kitchen gadget manufacturers want you to believe, cooking well does not require that you purchase insanely expensive pieces of culinary technology. It does not require mysterious ingredients that you can only find in the dark corners of the Internet. It does not even require much know-how beyond a willingness to practice and a sense of adventure. Cooking is easy and, if you're doing it correctly, cooking is also fun. Cooking is only ever not easy or fun if you're unprepared, overwhelmed, or really, really hungry. The section that follows will provide you with the tools you need in order to avoid these diminished states. Slice, dice, simmer, and sizzle your way to gastronomic glory.



▶ **PAN PALS**

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You're about to get to know your pans on a much deeper level.

# PANS YOU NEED

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## The 12-Inch Cast-Iron Pan

There's something to be said about a cooking device that also doubles as a weapon. A cast-iron pan is hefty. It's sturdy. It's formidable. It's also relatively inexpensive (most will cost you about \$50). But it's no oaf, either. Due to its heavy, one-piece construction, a cast-iron pan can heat to screaming temperatures, puffing up dough for [homemade pizzas](#) and [searing steaks](#) to juicy perfection. Cast iron also maintains steady heat at lower temperatures, morphing into an almost Crock-Pot-like vessel should you pop a lid on it and place it in the oven. The right cast-iron pan, some say, can even recite Hamlet's soliloquy. All this said, a cast-iron pan will treat you only as well as you treat it. Like any other symbiotic relationship, you will depend upon each other over the course of your lives. Here are the keys to that healthy relationship—cast iron's love languages, if you will.

- ▶ **Cast-iron pans must never suffer under abrasion.** Try not to use metal tools when cooking with cast iron. Will occasional stirring with a serving spoon damage the surface? Probably not. But will scraping the seasoning with a metal spatula or, worse yet, scrubbing it with steel wool hurt? Absolutely. Be gentle. Use wooden or silicone tools whenever possible.
- ▶ **Cast-iron pans must never go through the dishwasher.** Make this blunder and the pan's "seasoning," or protective coating, will deteriorate, and this can lead to scars in the surface or rust. No one ever says, "Dinner was delicious, but it could have used a touch more ferrous oxide." Hand-wash your pan, dry it quickly, pour a dab of oil on its surface, rub it in with a paper towel, and store.
- ▶ **Cast-iron pans must never be stored hap hazardly.** If your kitchen cabinets are as organized as a teenager's bedroom, this is going to be a challenge. See, if other pots and pans rest beneath or atop cast iron, all that banging around you do when you're trying to

find something could lead to scrapes or dings in the surface. Not good. There is a simple solution, however: Place a sheet or two of paper towels between any pans nesting within the cast-iron pan. Think of it as putting the pan to bed when not in use.

## HOW TO CLEAN A CAST-IRON PAN ACCORDING TO ITS LEVEL OF DISGUSTINGNESS

**Level 1: The pan is barely disgusting at all.** Maybe you just cooked bacon in the thing. There's some grease in the pan, but not enough to really matter. Simply take a paper towel and wipe the pan clean. Yes, that's it. If you're squeamish, you can undergo a level 2 cleaning, but it's not necessary. Really.

**Level 2: The pan is pretty disgusting.** Okay, so you seared up a few pork chops and some nubby bits adhered to pan. No problem. Run the pan under hot water and scrub the nubs with the soft side of a sponge. Try to resist using dish soap, which some people say can ruin the seasoning. Elbow grease should be enough to do the job. Then dry the pan well, add a drop of oil (canola, vegetable, olive—nothing too fancy), and smear it all over the pan with a paper towel so it has a light sheen.

**Level 3: The pan is horrifyingly disgusting.** It's tough to look at. Fret not. It's salvageable. First fill the pan with about an inch of water. Then place it over high heat. Boil until the crud floats to the surface, about 5 minutes. Wearing oven mitts, dump the water and wipe out the pan with a paper towel. At this point, if there's still gnarly stuff clinging to the surface, pour some kosher salt into the pan and scrub it with a paper towel. Rinse and repeat, if needed.





## A Large Nonstick Pan and a Small Nonstick Pan

If a cast-iron pan is your bad cop, the force you enlist when you need a tough job done fast, then the nonstick pan is your good cop. It has a little more subtlety, a little more finesse. You'll turn to nonstick pans for a quick sauté, stir-fry, scramble, and so much more. While nonstick doesn't have the power of cast iron, it's much easier to clean. Whenever possible, buy nonstick, heavy-bottom pans made from stainless steel, aluminum, and copper. This is because aluminum and copper heat quickly, but stainless steel holds temperatures better. Why two pans? The large one works for bigger-batch cooking, while the small one helps you out with sauces and in instances when you're only cooking for one.

## A Grill Pan

Some people have the good fortune of living in places where idyllic weather patterns allow for year-round grilling. Whoop-de-freakin'-do for them. The rest of us, save for a few maniacs who grill during snow squalls (author included), suffer through winter without that deeply satisfying charbroiled flavor.

Unless, that is, a grill pan resides in the kitchen. Manufacturers offer nonstick and cast-iron versions, the latter of which tend to hold up better over time but pose the same cleaning hassles as regular ol' cast-iron pans. It's up to you to decide which one you want to pick. Just don't go without one.

### PUT A LID ON IT

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There's a lid for every pan, so the saying sort of goes. So keep them handy. When you cook in a pan without a lid, the moisture evaporates. This is great when you're trying to develop a delicious caramelized exterior on meat and vegetables. But on the flip side, when you cook in a pan with a lid, the moisture stays trapped inside, steaming the food, minimizing the risk of burning whatever food you're cooking underneath the lid. This is great for when

you're trying to develop a juicy interior for meat and vegetables.  
See how well the two go together?



# PANS YOU DON'T NEED

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## **A Wok**

This dome-shaped superpan quick-cooks foods over high heat. That's great for stir-fry, but not all that much else, except maybe for wearing as a hat if you're drunk and feeling silly. A large nonstick pan works fine for stir-frying.

## **A Pan Shaped like Something Other Than a Pan**

If you're up past your bedtime and see an infomercial advertising a pan shaped like a teddy bear face, Disney princess, or the state of Texas, resist. That joke is going to get real old, real fast, and then you're going to be left with yet another kitchen gadget you don't use but still keep around. Shouldn't you be in bed, anyway?

## ***Pan***

This 2015 movie starring Hugh Jackman and Levi Miller is also not worth your time or money, despite the lure of special effects or Jackman's curious facial hair.

# TOOLS THAT ARE NOT PANS

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Sadly, although the title of this book implies otherwise, you will need a few other devices beyond a pan to make great meals. Unfortunately, as of 2017, pans cannot yet chop tubers, puree salsa, or stir themselves.

## A Chef's Knife

If you're not cooking with the right knife, you might as well be cooking with both of your hands stuffed into bread rolls. Too many home cooks bumble through kitchen tasks with knives that are too small or not sharp enough. So do something really nice for yourself and buy an 8-inch chef's knife. Not a rinky-dink 6-incher or one of those neat-looking Japanese Santoku blades. Chef's knives are far more heavy-duty, dependable, and functional. Some of these sell for \$300. You'll be fine with one priced around 80 bucks. Then bring it home and slice through a tomato. See how much better that is?

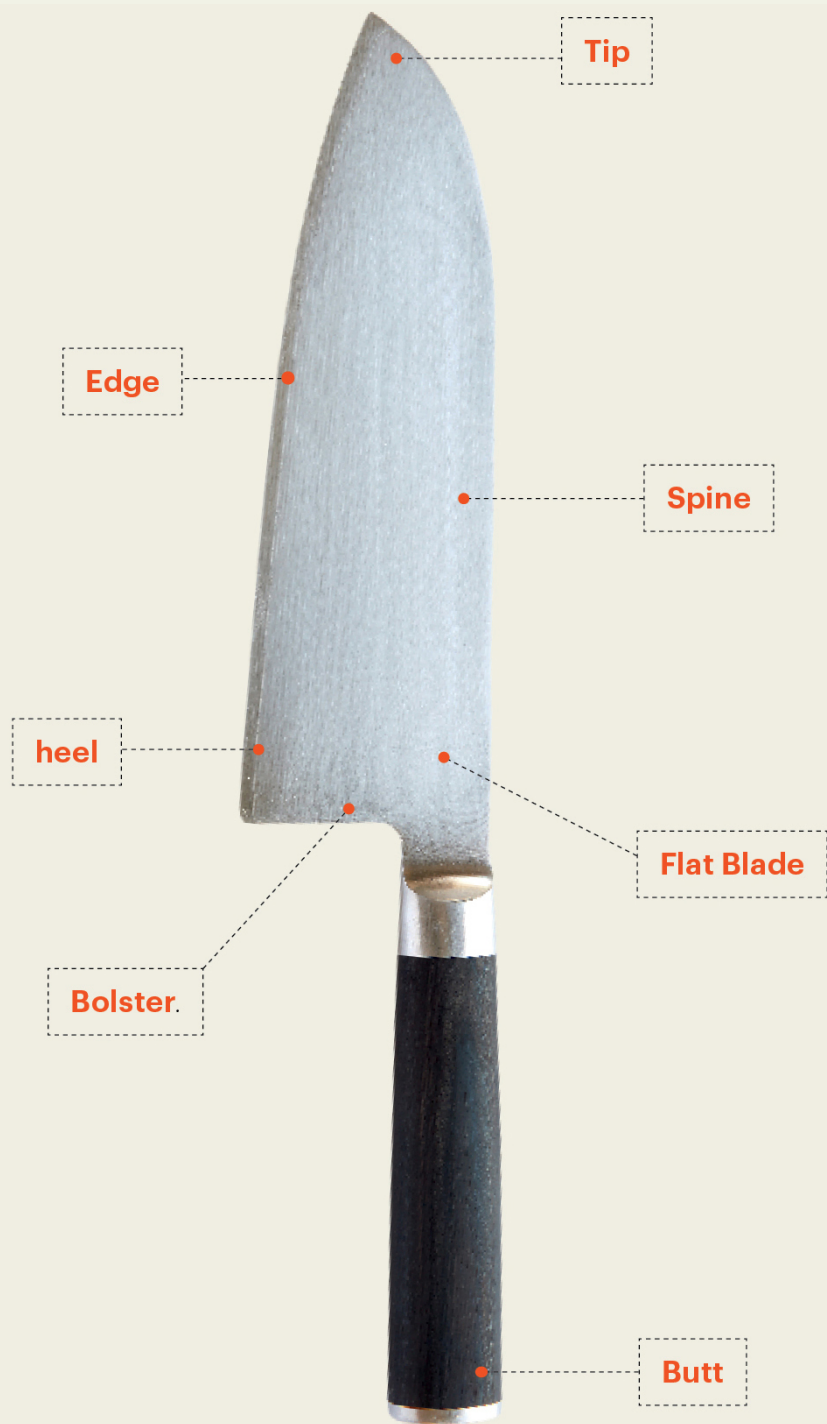
## A Paring Knife

If you took a chef's knife and ran it through the *Honey, I Shrunk the Kids* ray gun, you'd have a paring knife. A paring knife is handy for digging the pith out of tomatoes, peeling the rinds off citrus, and transforming radishes into roses (if you're into that kind of thing). It is not good for slicing onions, chopping carrots, or peeling potatoes, so please stop doing that before you hurt yourself.

## A Cutting Board

The makeup of your board (plastic, wood) is less important than the size of your board. Buy the largest board that makes sense for your countertop and storage space. Small cutting boards fill up quickly with prepped ingredients and impede kitchen efficiency. Large boards provide ample room for slicing and dicing and save you from having to wash them repeatedly during the cooking process. (That said, always wash the board when transitioning between working with produce and meat to reduce your risk of foodborne illness.)

# GETTING TO KNOW YOUR CHEF'S KNIFE



### Edge

It is responsible for chopping meat, vegetables, fish, and pretty much anything else. You'll use this part of the knife the most.

### Tip

It is helpful for drawing through an avocado for thin slices, making precise cuts into an onion, and twisting through hard cheeses to create crumbles.

### Spine

You can use it to whap the shells of lobster or crab claws so that they reveal the meat inside. Just be careful, okay?

### Flat Blade

It's great for smashing garlic cloves out of their skins and for easily transporting prepped ingredients from cutting board to pan.

### Butt

Heh. Butt

### Bolster

It won't cut anything, but it does serve to orient you whenever you grip the knife. Some people only clutch the handle when using a chef's knife. You'll have far more stability and control if you pinch your thumb and forefinger just above the bolster on the blade with the rest of your fingers holding the handle.

## **AN OVEN MITT (OR, THE HEART-WRENCHING CAUTIONARY TALE OF MARIA M.)**

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The following is a true story.

There once was a *Men's Health* employee named Maria M. She graciously volunteered her time and effort to the food blog *Guy Gourmet* to produce a how-to series for the beginner called "Cooking for Noobs." What Maria, the noob, lacked in culinary know-how she made up for in a willingness to learn. Over the course of her experience, she overcame numerous challenges and

gradually built up her cooking confidence to the point where she felt comfortable enough to participate in a grand experiment.

For this experiment Maria traveled to New York City to cook a full meal under the loose supervision of a famous chef, Joey C. To further describe the scene, Maria was to prepare a meal of roast chicken, mashed potatoes, and Brussels sprouts. Joey would watch from afar, chiming in only if Maria desperately needed help. The day's events were recorded on video for the enjoyment and instruction of *Men's Health* viewers.

Maria, under considerable pressure, managed to put together a majority of the meal with aplomb. She did, however, make one grave mistake. As Joey had recommended, Maria roasted the chicken in a cast-iron pan. As Maria rushed to assemble all the cooked food onto a plate, she opened the oven to grab the pan. Maria did not wear an oven mitt when doing so. Maria's hand immediately withdrew from the searing hot handle. Maria nearly fainted. Her hand was severely burned. Luckily, she sought medical attention and eventually made a full recovery. She even still cooks, but always with protection when handling hot kitchen hardware.

Always wear an oven mitt whenever you're transporting a hot pan around the kitchen. Don't let the lesson of Maria's misadventure go unlearned.

### **A Big Bowl or Two**

Recipes will often ask you to mix large amounts of things. When this occurs, you don't want to be left with a dinky bowl that can't handle the load. Pick up a set of three glass or, if you're a klutz, stainless-steel bowls of various sizes. You will almost always need the largest one, but it's nice to have the others on hand.



### **A Flat-Edge Wooden Spoon**

When you sear meat in a cast-iron pan, little bits of caramelized protein cling to the surface. These bits, unofficially called Niblets of Amazement, should not be wasted due to their concentrated flavor. A flat-edge wooden spoon can safely scrape these niblets from the pan and transform them, combined with some wine, into a simple sauce. In a pinch, this tool can also flip steaks, scramble eggs, and break up ground meat while it cooks in the pan.

### **A Fish Spatula**

The power of this tool should not be contained within its name. It is excellent for flipping fish, yes, but it's so much more. Watch in wonder as its tapered tip turns burgers with ease! Stand awestruck in disbelief as its long, accommodating surface transports massive pork chops from pan to plate! Gasp with surprise as it pulls double duty, MacGyver-style, to whisk a large bowl of eggs! This thing does it all!

### **Kitchen Shears**

Okay, they're scissors. But they're *strong* scissors, capable of snipping the backs out of whole chickens, dissecting the thick carapace of a cooked lobster, and even cutting up raw meat if you're feeling lazy. Plus, they do all the things a normal pair of scissors does, too, so be sure not to run with them.

### **A Pepper Mill**

Freshly ground pepper tastes robust, warming, and slightly spicy. Pre-ground pepper, by comparison, tastes like dirt. Pick up a pepper mill and a large container of whole peppercorns. Fill. Grind. Instantly upgrade the deliciousness of every meal.

### **A Food Processor or Blender**

Okay, these can get pricey, but think of it as an investment in your sanity. The alternative to quickly pulverizing large amounts of food is hand-chopping everything until your forearm locks up in mutiny. For cooking purposes, a food processor can do more than a blender can. But a blender can make margaritas, so there's that.

# OTHER IMPORTANT THINGS YOU MUST KNOW

*Possessing the correct kitchen hardware is essential. But smart, efficient, and fun cooking also requires a certain level of “software.” Think of this section as insider knowledge—your shortcut to tricks of the trade that seasoned home cooks pick up and implement over time.*

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## HOW TO READ A RECIPE

*This may seem obvious to you, but too many home cooks only sort of read the recipe. And “sort of,” in most cases, leads to sort of delicious food. Reading a recipe is an unsung skill. Here’s how to pick it up.*

- 1. Read the entire recipe.** Don’t skim it. Don’t just look at the ingredients to determine its ease. Don’t make assumptions based on the number of steps. Before you pick up a knife or fire up a burner—heck, before you even go grocery shopping—read and visualize each step. This way, you’ll know exactly what kind of tools you need and when to use them. Surprises are a frantic home cook’s most nefarious enemy.
- 2. Treat the ingredients list as a precooking checklist.** Chefs use the fussy term *mise en place* for having all their food prepped and ready to go before they start cooking. Organization aids efficiency, naturally. So when you see “1 can chickpeas, rinsed and drained,” do just that before you begin working with heat; “1 red bell pepper, seeded and chopped” does not mean “1 red bell pepper, seeded and chopped when you’re in the middle of sautéing the garlic, which, oh crap, is burning!”



**3. Cook with a pencil.** Think of recipes as road maps: They offer the most direct route to your destination, but not the only one. While every single recipe in this book has been rigorously tested, that doesn't mean there isn't a way to improve upon their flavor by adding another seasoning. It also doesn't mean that it's 100 percent foolproof for your home kitchen, either. Your burners may be weaker or stronger. Your oven may run hotter. You may like your steak done medium-well (heathen!). Mark up the recipe with your notes so that your future self can enjoy the meal even more.

# HOW TO LOVE COOKING

*Maybe you like to cook. Maybe you find it a means to an end. Maybe you think of it more as a necessary evil. Regardless of your feelings toward the act, these strategies will nudge you closer to harboring stronger affections.*

**1. Eat something, will you?** Did you ever see that horror movie *The Hunger*, where a ravenous home cook attempts to prepare a feast while an unseen force terrorizes him from inside? Okay, it doesn't exist, but perhaps you've actually lived it. Cooking on an empty stomach often produces monstrous results. Have some cheese and crackers. Or a few good olives. Or a small bowl of fresh berries. Nibble when needed. Fight The Hunger.

**2. Set the stage.** You're about to conduct a project, which means that your work space needs to encourage productivity. Clean out your sink of any dishes. Roll out a few sheets of paper towels and stack them somewhere within reach. Flip on all the lights. Pour yourself a glass of water. Pull out your pans and other necessary tools. Now you're ready to work.

**3. Have a drink.** Noted witticism generator W.C. Fields once said, "I cook with wine. Sometimes I even add it to the food." Cooking, like darts or billiards, always goes a little easier with an alcoholic beverage in hand. Stop at one. You need your fingers for other things beyond holding a beer bottle.

**4. Pump up the jams.** A quiet kitchen is a boring kitchen. Music sets the backing track to creativity and gives you an excuse to shake your booty while you sauté some snap peas.

## HOW TO AT LEAST NOT HATE COOKING

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1. Never cook bacon shirtless.

- 2.** Don't eat medium-rare chicken.
- 3.** Always wash your hands well after touching hot peppers and especially before visiting the bathroom, rubbing your eyes, or changing your contacts.
- 4.** Taste your food as you go. It's better to realize a dish needs more salt *before* it reaches a table of hungry and expectant eaters.
- 5.** Know that you can, at any moment, stop, remove the pan from the heat, take a restorative breath, and then commence cooking again. Be not a slave to the stovetop.



## HERE'S A FOOD-THEMED PLAYLIST TO GET THINGS MOVING

▶ **“ALL YOU CAN EAT”**—SHONEN KNIFE

▶ **“BEANS AND CORNBREAD”**—LOUIS JORDAN

▶ **“BISCUITS”**—KACEY MUSGRAVES

▶ **“BREAKIN’ BREAD”**—THE JBS

▶ **“BULLION”**—MR. MITCH

▶ **“BUTTERED POPCORN”** —THE SUPREMES

▶ **“COOKIN’ (IN the KITCHEN OF LOVE)”**—RINGO STARR

▶ **“EGGS AND SAUSAGE”**—TOM WAITS

▶ **“FALAFEL”**—BUTTERING TRIO

▶ **“FAT BELLY”** —HOMEBOY SANDMAN

▶ **“FOIL”**—WEIRD AL YANKOVIC

▶ **“FOOD FIGHT!”**—TITUS ANDRONICUS

▶ **“FRIDAY NIGHT FISH FRY”** — MEL WAITERS

▶ **“GEORGIE PIE”**—LAVENDER COUNTRY

▶ **“GIMME A PIGFOOT”**—BESSIE SMITH

▶ **“HAM ’N’ EGGS”**—A TRIBE CALLED QUEST

▶ **“HUNGRY, SO ANGRY”**—MEDIUM MEDIUM

▶ **“ICE CREAM”** —RAEKWON

▶ **“IN THE KITCHEN”** —THE TOUGH ALLIANCE

▶ **“KEEP MY SKILLET GOOD AND GREASY”**—WOODY GUTHRIE

▶ **“MEAT AND POTATOES”**—BELLE & SEBASTIAN

▶ **“NUTRITION”** —THE DEAD MILKMEN

▶ **“SALT PEANUTS”**—DIZZY GILLESPIE

▶ **“STEAK FACE”**—LOUIS ARMSTRONG

▶ **“TACO TACO TACOS”**—PEELANDER-Z

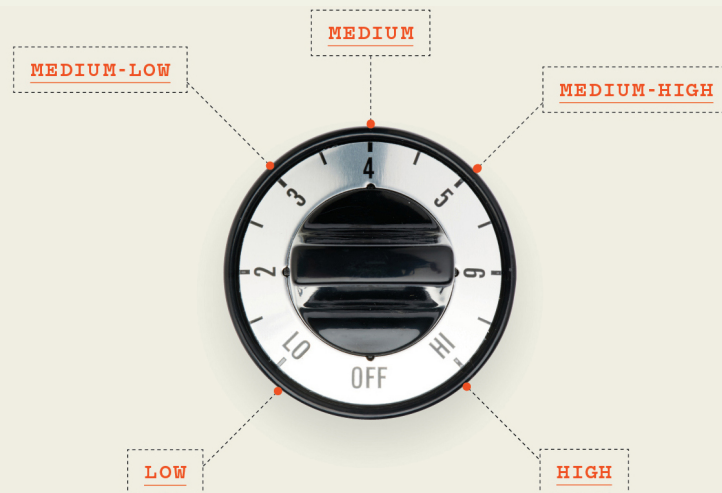
▶ **“TOAST”**—ARCHERS OF LOAF

▶ **“WATERMELON MAN”**—HERBIE HANCOCK

▶ **“WHO STOLE MY LAST PIECE OF CHICKEN?”**—ORGANIZED KONFUSION

# GETTING TO KNOW YOUR STOVETOP

*You'll be cooking the majority of the recipes in this book atop your stove. For that reason, it's best to gain an understanding of how your burners work and how each temperature setting operates best. Again, settings may vary based on use of gas or electric and/or the efficiency of your rig. Let the following stand as a general guide.*



## Low

Consider this your burner's "pause" button. This setting will gently warm your pans if you want to get a jump on heating them before adding oil. It'll also hold foods at a pleasant temperature when they're done cooking. This setting also cooks a pretty darn good egg (page 18).

## Medium-Low

If you have liquid in the pan, medium-low serves as a good temperature for slowly poaching meats and vegetables. It's also a happy place for sautéing delicate vegetables such as peas, green beans, and spinach.

## Medium

You'll do most of your cooking with these next two settings. Medium heat is your most dependable go-to when it comes to sautéing tougher vegetables (carrots, kale, potatoes), cooking bite-size pieces of meat, and bubbling tomato sauces.

### **Medium-High**

This temp blisters food with flecks of char. In small doses, this char adds a subtle smokiness to your meals. Too much and it'll taste like a charcoal briquette. Turn the dial here when you want to sear steaks, burgers, fish, chicken, lamb, and any other protein you'd otherwise cook on a grill.

### **High**

You should use this setting only to boil water. Restaurant chefs tend to cook over high heat frequently, but unless you plan to open a restaurant anytime soon, stick to lower settings. Medium-high will do.

# GETTING TO KNOW YOUR OVEN

*The ol' hot box is good for so much more than reheating leftover pizza. Leverage its many settings to your culinary advantage.*

## **200°F/WARM**

At this temp, your oven won't cook all that much—but that can be a good thing. If you're finished warming tortillas for the [tacos](#), you can wrap them in foil and pop them in the oven set at this temperature. While you're off sizzling the beef, you won't have to worry about the tortillas turning cold and sad on the dinner table. Anytime you need to hold the temperature of a food at warm, adjust the temp to 200°F.

## **250° TO 275°F**

You can use this setting for dehydrating your own beef jerky or making oven-roasted tomatoes, but unfortunately you won't find those recipes in this book. While you could, technically, make those things in a pan, there are far more delicious recipes deserving of your time and effort on the pages that follow. If it's cold in your house, you could also use this setting as an inefficient hand warmer.

## **300° TO 400°F**

Ah, now here's a temperature range with some oomph. It's best for cooking more delicate proteins about the size of a deck of cards (think chicken breasts and fish fillets). In general, the thicker the "deck" the lower the temp and the longer the cook until it's juicy on the inside without being burned on the outside. This range is also a good place to finish cooking foods you'd start at a higher oven temp in order to sear first. More on that in the next section.

## **425°F TO HOWEVER HIGH YOUR OVEN GOES**

Now you're cooking with some firepower. These temperatures are great for searing large cuts of protein, such as rib roasts, whole



chickens, or whole fish. (You'll want to bump the temperature down after some time to avoid burning dinner, however.) It's also an excellent range for roasting vegetables until they're soft and sweet.

## **BROIL**

Think of this underutilized temp as a "grill" setting for your oven. For many electric ovens, the broiler runs in a snakelike pattern tucked underneath the topmost part. Flip it on and watch the coil turn red. Place food under the red coil and watch food sizzle, bubble, brown, and sear. You can broil steaks, fish fillets, pork chops, pineapple rings, halved tomatoes, and basically whatever else you feel inclined to. Except your hand. Please don't broil your hand.



# A NOTE ABOUT NUTRITION

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This isn't a diet book. In fact, *diet* is actually a four-letter word around the offices of *Men's Health*. That's because at the root of *diet* is the word *die*, which is what the vast majority of diets do given the appropriate amount of time, especially diets based on shaky pseudoscientific claims. It's also what most diets make you want to do when you're into your third week of consuming nothing but gluten-free rice crackers and smoothies the color of toxic sludge. The best way to approach food is not "I really need to go on a diet," but instead "I really need a healthful lifestyle that includes good food." Note that "lifestyle" incorporates food but also makes room for sleeping well, exercising, managing stress, and generally being a nice person. Diets, on the other hand, make The Solution to All of Life's Problems all about food. See why diets deserve to die?

So while *A Man, A Pan, A Plan* isn't a panacea, it can serve as a way to incorporate healthful, home-cooked meals into your life. Many of the recipes are nutritious. Many of the recipes contain the protein you need to build muscle and stay full until your next meal. None of the recipes include the weirdo chem-lab-type ingredients that you'll likely find in premade meals. Many of the recipes include sizable portions of disease-fighting fruits and vegetables. And if they don't, you'll find a section of this book devoted to vegetable-based side dishes that cook up fast. It's practical, not prescriptive.

## ABOUT THE NUTRITION NUMBERS

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You'll see the nutrition content of each meal tacked onto each recipe in this book. These numbers come from the USDA database, not some smartphone app with unreliable user-generated content. Given that, know that this information is only an estimate of total nutrition. Don't feel like you have to measure your olive oil to the teaspoon or weigh your steak on a scale. What fun is razor precision in the kitchen anyway? Let loose!



# HOW TO BEST USE THIS BOOK

*There are a few more tidbits you should know before you start cranking out incredible meals. Consider these pointers on how to maximize the information in this book—the prerequisites, as a college professor might call them.*

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- ▶ **The phrases *salt and pepper, to taste, and season with salt and pepper* mean that you should add salt and pepper according to how seasoned you like your food.** If you like more salt, add enough to your liking. If you like less, well, you get the point. *Salt* in this book always means kosher salt unless otherwise noted. *Pepper* always means freshly ground black peppercorn from a pepper mill—not the preground kind from a shaker.
- ▶ **Also note that, in most cases, salt and pepper are not listed in ingredients lists.** This is not to frustrate you. This is to declutter the ingredients lists. Plus, you should always have salt and pepper on hand. It's the same reason that *water* is also never listed in the ingredients list. Salt and pepper are the vitals of cooking.
- ▶ **Similarly, the word *Parmesan* always refers to freshly grated Parmesan cheese—the kind from the block of actual cheese, not the tasteless powder from the shaker.**
- ▶ **If you don't like to use canola oil, fine.** Use coconut oil or butter or whatever. If you prefer 2% milk to whole, go for it. Enjoy the taste of Greek yogurt over sour cream? That's totally fine. But resist the urge to demonize certain ingredients. Greek yogurt is no “better” or “worse” for you than sour cream is. Greek yogurt does have more protein, yes, but that doesn't make sour cream evil. One note on reduced-fat foods: Fat isn't inherently bad for you (really, scientists say so!), but it does come with extra calories. If you like the taste of reduced-fat foods, go for it. But if you like the taste of whole-fat

versions, don't guilt-trip yourself, man. Shift your perspective; transform your lifestyle.

▶ **There are many variables when it comes to cooking in a pan: the strength (or weakness) of your burner, the thinness of your pan, the temperature of the food you're putting into the pan, etc.** The recipes to come provide ranges or estimates for cooking times, but please know that these numbers are not mandates. This may sound obvious, but if a recipe says "cook till browned, 8 to 10 minutes" and the food looks pretty gosh-darn brown at 7 minutes, go with your gut and move on to the next step.

▶ **Some recipes in this book require more tools than just one pan.** In fact, some recipes require a whopping *two* pans. If you were thinking otherwise, your expectations for the concept of this book are commendable, but unpractical for the purposes of cooking more complex fare. If you're really, really upset, feel free to contact customer service at 1-800-EAS-YNOW.

# BREAKFAST

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Without breakfast, life would not be fair. Rousing yourself out of bed would be even more challenging than it already is. Fighting through the morning at work would be far more grueling. And just think of all the wasted efforts of the world's hardworking hens as egg consumption dropped precipitously! Do yourself (and the chickens) a favor and start your day right each morning. These recipes honor the first meal of the day—but taste so good you can make them for your second and third meals of your day, too.



## THE RECIPES

Egg and Tomato Breakfast Sandwich with Herb Mayo

One Perfect Sunny-Side-Up Egg

Migas

Crispy Homemade Home Fries

Almond, Blueberry, Cinnamon Skillet Granola

Meghan's Lemon-Blueberry-Banana Pancakes

Beet Fritters with Smoked Salmon

Supergreens Anytime Frittata

Spanish Omelet

Porcini Mushroom and Goat Cheese Omelet

Fried Rice

Eggs in Hades

Huevos Rancheros with Black Bean–Avocado Salsa

Sausage, Garlic, and Greens with a Soft-Boiled Egg





# Egg and Tomato Breakfast Sandwich with Herb Mayo

If your first human interaction of the day is with a fast-food drive-thru intercom, you're off to a bad start. Eat this instead. You'll avoid the grease trap, fill up on fiber, and even sneak in some vegetables before noon. Go, you.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 Tbsp mayonnaise
- 1 Tbsp chopped fresh herbs (basil, rosemary, oregano, and/or thyme)
- 1 Tbsp butter
- 1 whole wheat English muffin, split
- 1 large egg
- 1 slice large tomato, ½" thick

1. In a small bowl, mix the mayo and herbs. Set aside.
2. In a large nonstick pan over medium heat, melt half the butter. Add the 2 halves of the English muffin, cut side down. Toast until golden brown, 2 to 4 minutes. Transfer the muffin to a plate and spread the mayo on 1 muffin half.
3. In the same pan, add the remaining butter and swirl to coat. Add the egg and the tomato on separate sides of the pan. Season the tomato with salt and pepper. Cook the egg to your liking, about 1 minute per side for over easy, 2 minutes for over hard. Flip the tomato when you flip the egg. On the muffin with the mayo, add the tomato and egg. Close the sandwich. Chow.

Feeds 1. *Nutrition per serving: 412 calories, 13 g protein, 28 g carbohydrates (5 g fiber), 29 g fat*

# One Perfect Sunny-Side-Up Egg

Wait a second. You spent a pretty good chunk of change on this book and it includes instructions for a single, measly egg? Now just you listen: this recipe is here for a very good reason. Learning to cook a perfect sunny-side-up egg is a lesson in the transformative powers of low heat in a small pan. Watch and learn. And then eat.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

½ Tbsp butter

1 egg

1. In a small nonstick pan over medium-low heat, melt the butter.
2. Add the egg and cook until the whites around the yolk no longer wiggle when you shake the pan, about 8 minutes. Serve topped with sea salt, maybe on top of toast, home fries, or a breakfast sandwich. Feeds 1. *Nutrition per serving: 122 calories, 6 g protein, 0 g carbohydrates (0 g fiber), 11 g fat*

### ► WHY'S THAT?

Eating burnt eggs is about as wonderful as cleaning toilet bowls. Low heat helps egg proteins coagulate slowly, resulting in a more tender, creamy breakfast. It works with scrambled eggs, too.

# Migas

Do you like breakfast? Do you like nachos? Then welcome these breakfast nachos into your morning. They're crunchy. They're eggy. They're cheesy. And they're great for using up the tortilla chip shake left at the bottom of the bag.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 Tbsp canola oil
- ¼ medium white onion, chopped (about ½ cup)
- 1 cup lightly crushed tortilla chips
- 3 large eggs
- 2 Tbsp shredded cheese (pepper jack or cheddar)
- ½ avocado, cubed
  - leaves from 2 or 3 cilantro stems
  - hot sauce, to taste

- 1.** In a large nonstick pan, heat the canola oil over medium. Add the onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until translucent, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the chips and heat until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Then crack in the eggs, lower the heat to medium low, and cook, stirring constantly, until the eggs set, 1 to 2 minutes.
- 2.** Transfer the migas to a large plate and top with cheese, avocado, cilantro, and hot sauce. Feeds 1. *Nutrition per serving: 659 calories, 25 protein, 28 g carbohydrates (7 g fiber), 50 g fat*

# Crispy Homemade Home Fries

Diners are wonderful places, largely because of this spud-based side dish. But you (yes, you!) Can re-create the very same crunchy-outside-soft-inside home fries at home. Flop two fried eggs on top and/or stir in some diced ham and—whammo—you have a filling one-bowl breakfast.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

4 cups large-diced potatoes (2 to 3 large potatoes)

2 Tbsp olive oil

½ small red onion, diced

½ red bell pepper, diced

2 garlic cloves, minced

1 tsp paprika

pinch ground cayenne

2 Tbsp chopped parsley

1. In a large nonstick pan, add the potatoes and cover with water. Turn the heat to high and boil the potatoes until fork-tender, about 5 minutes. Drain.
2. Place the same pan over medium and heat the oil. Return the drained potatoes to the pan and cook, stirring occasionally, until golden brown, 5 to 7 minutes. Add the onion, bell pepper, garlic, and paprika. Cook, stirring frequently, until the onion is translucent, 2 to 3 minutes.
3. Remove the pan from the heat and stir in the cayenne. Season with salt and pepper. Serve topped with the parsley. Feeds 4, as a side. *Nutrition per serving: 258 calories, 5 g protein, 44 g carbohydrates (4 g fiber), 7 g fat*



# Almond, Blueberry, Cinnamon Skillet Granola

Let's call granola what it really is: glorified breakfast cereal. That said, a bowl of frosted flakes doesn't have nuts, fruit, and flaxseeds. Sorry, Tony.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 2 Tbsp butter
- 2 Tbsp honey
- 2 Tbsp flaxseeds
- 2 Tbsp dried blueberries
- 1 cup old-fashioned oats
- ¼ cup sliced almonds
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon

**1.** In a large nonstick pan over medium heat, melt the butter. Stir in the honey and mix well. Add the flaxseeds and blueberries and cook, stirring frequently, until aromatic, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the oats, almonds, and cinnamon and cook, stirring continuously, until the almonds are golden brown and the mixture is slightly sticky, another 2 to 3 minutes.

**2.** Spread the granola on a sheet of aluminum foil and allow to cool. Store in a lidded container or serve with plain or vanilla Greek yogurt. Feeds 4. *Nutrition per serving: 214 calories, 5 g protein, 27 g carbohydrates (4 g fiber), 10 g fat*





# Meghan's Lemon-Blueberry-Banana Pancakes

A good pancake must be equally hearty and fluffy. That's where ricotta, the stabilizer of the milk product world, steps in. Its creamy curds buff up the batter, preventing the dreaded feeble flapjack syndrome.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 cup ricotta
- 2 Tbsp sugar
- 3 eggs, whites and yolks separated
  - zest from 1 lemon
- 2 Tbsp melted butter, plus more for brushing
- 7 Tbsp flour
- 1 cup blueberries, lightly mashed
- 1 banana, sliced
  - maple syrup, for serving (optional)

- 1.** In a large bowl, mix the ricotta, sugar, egg yolks, and lemon zest. Gradually whisk in the 2 Tbsp of melted butter, followed by the flour. Mix till well combined.
- 2.** In a medium bowl, whisk the egg whites until all the bubbles are gone. Add the egg whites and blueberries to the large bowl and mix well.
- 3.** Brush a large nonstick pan with butter and heat over medium. Working in batches, add heaping spoonfuls of the batter to the pan. Cook until golden brown, 2 minutes per side. Serve immediately, topped with banana slices and syrup, if desired. Makes 10 to 14 smallish pancakes.

Feeds 4. *Nutrition per serving: 360 calories, 14 g protein, 31 g carbohydrates (2 g fiber), 21 g fat*



# Beet Fritters with Smoked Salmon

Congratulations, you've just found the best dang brunch recipe in this whole book. It's also the messiest, due to the work you'll have to do on the beets. Like, your sink will look like Patrick Bateman stopped by for a visit. Apologies for the not-so-appetizing image. Just keep your guests out of the kitchen.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

3 large beets, washed, and shredded with the coarse side of a grater

1 egg

4 tsp cornstarch plus additional

¼ cup canola oil

¼ cup sour cream

4 oz smoked salmon

2 Tbsp chopped dill

¼ small red onion, minced

1 Tbsp capers

½ lemon, cut into 4 wedges

**1.** Using paper towels, wring as much moisture from the beets as possible. In a large bowl, combine the beets, egg, and the cornstarch. Toss well, adding more cornstarch ½ tsp at a time until the mixture is only slightly moist.

**2.** In a large nonstick pan over medium, heat the oil. When the oil shimmers, add a small pile of the shredded beets and press down with a spatula until the fritter is palm-size. Season with a small pinch of salt and pepper and cook till crisp on the bottom, 1 to 2 minutes. Flip and repeat. Work in batches until all of the beets are gone. Transfer to a plate lined with paper towels to drain.

**3.** Transfer the fritters to plates and top with sour cream, salmon, dill, red onion, and capers. Serve with lemon wedges.

*Feeds 2. Nutrition per serving: 619 calories, 41 g protein, 20 g carbohydrates (4 g fiber), 42 g fat*

▶ **HOLY \$@%! KITCHEN TRICK: THE ONION DE-ONION-FIER!**

If you have a hot date or important business meeting later, you can defunk your onions to decrease their potency. After you cut them, pop them in a fine-mesh sieve and run them under cold water for 30 seconds. Drain. Cook. Breathe easy.

# Supergreens Anytime Frittata

Dark, leafy greens are the X-Men of nutrition. Their superpowers include helping you feel full for longer, fighting deadly diseases, and even battling high blood pressure. Use this egg, cheesy breakfast bake as the ideal delivery vessel. Wolverine loves this recipe.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 dozen eggs
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 cups roughly chopped broccoli
- 2 cups roughly chopped kale
- 2 cups spinach
- ½ cup freshly grated parmesan
- paprika, to taste

1. Preheat your oven to 350°F. In a medium bowl, beat the eggs with 2 big pinches of salt and pepper. Set aside.
2. In a large, oven-safe, nonstick pan, heat the olive oil. Add the broccoli, kale, and spinach. Cook, stirring occasionally, until wilted, about 5 minutes.
3. Adjust the heat to low and add the eggs. Swirl the pan so that the eggs sit in an even layer. Cook until the edges of the eggs begin to set, 1 to 2 minutes. Top with the cheese and slide the pan into the oven. Bake until the eggs set completely and the cheese melts, about 10 minutes.
4. Using an oven mitt, remove the pan from the oven. Allow the frittata to cool for 5 minutes before transferring to a cutting board and slicing.

Feeds 4. *Nutrition per serving: 317 calories, 25 g protein, 7 g carbohydrates (2 g fiber), 21 g fat*

# Spanish Omelet

This big, honkin' potato-and-egg dish is supersimple except for one challenge: overturning the entire thing onto a plate and then returning it to the pan toward the very end of cooking. Be decisive. Believe in yourself. You can do this.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

2 lb red potatoes, peeled, thinly sliced, and patted dry with paper towels

1 medium yellow onion, thinly sliced

2 cups olive oil

6 eggs

1. In a large bowl, combine the potatoes and onion with 2 big pinches of salt and pepper. Mix well.
2. In a large nonstick pan over medium heat, add the potatoes, onion, and olive oil. Cook the mixture in olive oil until the potatoes are very tender, about 20 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the potatoes and onion to a colander placed over a bowl to drain. Keep the olive oil for another use (you should have about 1½ cups). Wipe the pan clean.
3. In a large bowl, beat the eggs. Add the potatoes and onion and mix well.
4. Return the large nonstick pan to medium heat. Add the egg mixture and cook until the eggs begin to pull away from the sides of the pan and the underside is slightly browned, about 5 minutes.
5. Place a large, overturned dinner plate on top of the pan. In one swift, confident motion, flip the pan and the plate over. Lift the pan from the plate and then slide the omelet back into the pan to finish cooking, about 1 minute. Transfer to a cutting board. Slice and serve. Feeds 4. *Nutrition per serving: 516 calories, 14 g protein, 39 g carbohydrates (4 g fiber), 34 g fat*

▶ **WHY'S THAT?**

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Whoa, that's a lot of olive oil. Yes, yes it is. But you don't eat all that olive oil. You strain it and save it for later uses, such as scrambling drizzling eggs, over salads, or sautéing [home fries](#). Or for making more Spanish omelets.





# Porcini Mushroom and Goat Cheese Omelet

Leisurely mornings beg for something grander than scrambled eggs and squeeze-bottle ketchup. This recipe uses meaty mushrooms, creamy goat cheese, and freshly chopped herbs to elevate the eggs. Oh, you fancy now.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 2 Tbsp dried porcini mushrooms
- 3 large eggs
- 1 Tbsp butter
- 1 oz goat cheese, crumbled
- 1 Tbsp chopped parsley, for serving

1. In a medium bowl, cover the mushrooms with water and allow them to soak until rehydrated, at least 30 minutes. Rinse the mushrooms well and chop. Strain the mushroom liquid through a coffee filter and into a small bowl. Set aside.
2. In a medium bowl, beat the eggs vigorously with 1 tsp of the reserved mushroom liquid, along with a pinch each of salt and pepper.
3. In a large nonstick pan, melt the butter over medium-low. Add the eggs and cook, undisturbed, until set, 3 to 4 minutes.
4. Starting one-third of the way in, make a line using all the mushrooms and goat cheese. Using a spatula, fold the edge of the eggs over the mushrooms and cheese. Then carry the pan to the serving plate and use the spatula to gently guide the omelet to the plate, continuing to roll the omelet so that it sits in a tubelike shape on the plate. Top with the parsley.

Feeds 1. *Nutrition per serving: 485 calories, 31 g protein, 10 g carbohydrates (3 g fiber), 35 g fat*

▶ **WHY'S THAT?**

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Porcini mushrooms are tough to find fresh. Rehydrating the dried kind also bestows upon you a deeply flavorful liquid you can incorporate into the omelet. If you remember, soak the dried mushrooms overnight in the fridge. That way, you won't have to wait an extra 30 minutes in the morning, preventing the inevitable battle with hanger (hunger-induced anger).

# Fried Rice

No disrespect to toast, but there are much more delicious ways of ingesting your morning carbohydrates. For instance, that fourth of a container of chinese takeout rice you have sitting in your fridge right now? That's a fantastic foundation for a 10-minute egg-and-vegetable scramble.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 Tbsp canola oil
- ¼ onion, diced
- ¼ cup diced ham
- ½ cup leftover white or brown rice
- ¼ cup frozen mixed vegetables (corn, peas, carrots, etc.)
- 2 large eggs
- ½ tsp low-sodium soy sauce
- Sriracha, to taste

1. In a large nonstick pan over medium, heat the oil. Add the onion and ham and cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion is translucent, 2 to 3 minutes.
2. Add the rice and vegetables, adjust the heat to medium-low, and cook, stirring occasionally, until warmed, 2 to 3 minutes.
3. Add the eggs and cook, stirring frequently, until scrambled, about 2 minutes. Stir in the soy sauce. Transfer to a bowl. Squeeze on the sriracha.

Feeds 1. *Nutrition per serving: 448 calories, 22 g protein, 31 g carbohydrates (3 g fiber), 26 g fat*

# Eggs in Hades

Maybe you've heard of eggs in purgatory, also known as shakshuka, which is, in summary, eggs baked in tomato sauce? The fate of this dish is more certain. Enter the inferno.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 tsp canola oil
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ medium onion, chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 1 lb spicy chicken sausage, casings removed
- 1 (24 oz) jar tomato sauce
- 4 eggs
  - crushed red-pepper flakes, to taste
- 2 Tbsp chopped basil
- 2 whole wheat pocket pitas, cut in half, warmed, for serving

1. In a large nonstick or cast-iron pan, add the canola oil, garlic, and onion. Turn the heat to medium and cook, stirring occasionally, until the garlic is aromatic, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the bell pepper and cook, stirring frequently, until the onion is translucent, 2 to 3 minutes.
2. Add the chicken sausage and cook, stirring occasionally, until browned, 5 to 7 minutes. Pour in the tomato sauce and adjust the heat to medium-low.
3. Using the back of a serving spoon, make 4 shallow “cups” in the sauce. Carefully crack an egg into each cup. Cover the pan with a lid and simmer until the whites of the eggs cook through, about 10 minutes.
4. Serve topped with crushed red-pepper flakes, basil, and the pitas on the side.

Feeds 4. *Nutrition per serving: 402 calories, 31 g protein, 36 g carbohydrates (6 g fiber), 16 g fat*



# Huevos Rancheros with Black Bean– Avocado Salsa

People tend to wig out about huevos when they're on a restaurant menu. Deservedly so, because they're a-maz-ing. Except that it's not that hard to wig out over them while sitting at your dining room table either. Take 10 minutes to cook this. Eat. Rave. Consider opening your own restaurant.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

½ cup canned black beans, rinsed and drained

½ avocado, cubed

¼ small red onion, minced

juice from ¼ lime

1 Tbsp chopped cilantro

1 Tbsp canola oil

2 small (6") flour tortillas

2 eggs

1. In a medium bowl, mix the black beans, avocado, onion, lime juice, and cilantro. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
2. In a small nonstick pan, heat the canola oil over medium. When the oil shimmers, add the tortillas stacked atop one another. Cook until the top tortilla puffs, 15 to 30 seconds. Using tongs, flip the stack and then flip the top tortilla. Repeat 4 more times until all sides of the tortillas are cooked. Transfer the tortillas to a serving plate.
3. Adjust the pan's heat to medium-low. Carefully crack in the eggs, cover the pan with a lid, and cook until the whites are firm, 2 to 4 minutes. Slide the eggs onto the tortillas and top with the salsa. Eat with a fork and knife.



Feeds 1. *Nutrition per serving: 671 calories, 26 g protein, 60 g carbohydrates (13 g fiber), 39 g fat*



# Sausage, Garlic, and Greens with a Soft-Boiled Egg

The lids of pans are great for so much more than falling out of your kitchen cabinets. For instance, in this recipe, placing a lid atop the pan helps tough broccoli rabe turn tender quickly by creating a steamy cooking environment. Hooray, lids!

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 4 eggs
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 small onion, chopped
- ½ tsp caraway seeds
- 1 lb chicken sausage, casings removed
- 4 cups chopped broccolini or broccoli rabe
- 2 cups baby spinach

1. Bring a small pan filled with simmering water to a boil. Adjust the heat to medium. Once the water reaches a strong simmer, carefully add the eggs. Cook, gently rolling with a spoon occasionally, until soft-boiled, about 8 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, remove the eggs and transfer to a bowl to cool.
2. In a large pan, add the oil, garlic, and onion. Adjust the heat to medium. Cook the onion until translucent, 3 to 5 minutes. Add the caraway and sausage and cook until browned, 7 to 10 minutes. Add the greens, close the pan with a lid, and cook, stirring occasionally, until wilted, 3 to 5 minutes.
3. As the greens wilt, carefully peel the eggs. Transfer the contents of the pan to 2 serving platters and top with 2 eggs each, cut in half.

Feeds 2. *Nutrition per serving: 584 calories, 54 g protein, 13 g carbohydrates (4 g fiber), 35 g fat*

▶ **HOLY \$@%! KITCHEN TRICK: THE GARLIC BURN BLOCKER!**

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Throw raw garlic into hot oil and it'll likely burn fast. Add raw garlic into room-temperature oil and then increase the heat and you've solved your burning garlic problem.

# NOT BREAKFAST

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You could eat breakfast every meal of the day. There's no stopping you. But then you'd miss out on the fresh flavors, primo produce, and dish diversity supplied by lunch and dinner. Variety, after all, is the salt and pepper of life.



## THE RECIPES

Spicy Shrimp Ramen with Corn, Snow Peas, and Spinach  
Grilled “Lobster” Rolls with Old Bay Potato Chips  
The Fish Mac  
Two-Pan Cheddar, Prosciutto, and Pear Pressed Sandwiches  
Loaded Sweet Potatoes  
Sausage and Peppers Sandwich  
Mac and Cheese with Ham and Peas  
~~Pot~~ Pan Roast  
Pan-“Fried” Calamari with Sweet Chili Sauce  
Red Potato Picnic Salad  
Charred Radicchio Salad with Pomegranate, Blue Cheese, and Walnuts  
Cream of “Roasted” Tomato and Red Pepper Soup with Croutons  
Chicken Quesadilla with Roasted Red Salsa  
Pork Chop Cubanos  
Eggplant and Zucchini Lasagna  
Honey-Sriracha-Lime Chicken Wings  
Browned-Butter Gnocchi with Butternut Squash and Fried Sage  
Spaghetti Carbonara (Poached-Style)  
Everything Grilled Chicken Caesar Salad  
Extra-Bacony BALTs  
Grilled Cauliflower Steaks with Tahini and Herb Sauce  
Grilled Greek Salad Pitas  
Sloppy Grassy Joes  
Party Toast, Two Ways  
Crab Cakes with Asparagus  
Seared Scallops with Grapefruit, Radish, Avocado Salad  
Beer Mussels  
Steak 'n' Shrooms with Garlic Spinach  
Roasted Lemon-Rosemary Chicken and Potatoes  
Slightly Smoky Ratatouille  
Chicago Dogs

Four-Chile Pork Chops with Grilled Pineapple  
Shrimp Paella  
Catfish Almondine  
Beef Tacos with Charred Scallions and Salsa Verde  
Green Tea–Tuna Sushi Handrolls  
Jumbo Lump Crab Scampi with Cherry Tomatoes  
Chicken Schnitzel with Sauerkraut  
Pork Lo Mein with Loads of Vegetables  
Tuna Burgers with Avocado, Snow Peas, and Wasabi Mayo  
Spicy Bison Bacon Burgers  
Chicken Thighs with Burnt Mandarin Oranges and Green Olives  
Grilled Lamb and Vegetable Hummus Wraps  
Pork Chop Saltimbocca with Broccoli Rabe  
Chicken Pan Pie  
Seared Salmon with Cucumber Salad  
Pulled Pork  
Shrimp Gumbo  
Falafel with Fixins  
Salmon Curry with Garlic Naan  
Bison and Farro Chili  
Littleneck Clams with Garlic Bread  
Cabbage Noodles  
Italian Wedding Soup  
Cast-Iron Party Pizza!  
Ground Chicken Larb Cabbage Cups  
Red and Green Chicken Enchiladas  
Cold Peanut Noodles with Chicken  
Catfish Burritos with Pickled Red Onions and Chipotle Mayo  
Bell Pepper Beef Stir-Fry





# Spicy Shrimp Ramen with Corn, Snow Peas, and Spinach

Maybe the term “fancy ramen” is an oxymoron to you. But if you chuck the little seasoning baggy, throw in several handfuls of fresh vegetables, and simmer the noodles with succulent shrimp—you’ll come to.

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## WHAT YOU’LL NEED:

- ½ qt low-sodium seafood stock
- 1 package ramen, seasoning packet discarded
- ¼ lb shrimp, peeled and deveined
- ¼ cup frozen corn
- 1 handful baby spinach (about 1 cup)
- ¼ cup snow peas, trimmed
- 1 hard-boiled egg, halved
- 1 Tbsp chili-garlic sauce (such as Tuong Ot Toi Vietnam brand)
- 1 scallion, thinly sliced
- sesame seeds and low-sodium soy sauce, to taste

**1.** In a small nonstick pan over high heat, boil the stock. Slide in the ramen brick and cook until just tender, about 1 minute less than the package instructions, flipping halfway through. Add the shrimp and cook till pink, 1 to 2 minutes.

**2.** Remove the pan from the heat. Working clockwise, create piles of corn, spinach, snow peas, egg, and chili-garlic sauce. Top with scallion, sesame seeds, and soy sauce. Eat straight out of the pan or carefully pour into a large soup bowl.

Feeds 1. *Nutrition per serving: 503 calories, 28 g protein, 76 g carbohydrates (9 g fiber), 10 g fat*

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▶ **A MAN, A PANTRY, A PLAN: CHILI-GARLIC SAUCE**

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You're likely aware of the glory and wonder that is sriracha. Well, the same company that makes sriracha makes this fiery condiment, too. Though it fails to match the sheer heat of sriracha, chili-garlic sauce makes up for it with a pungent tang that tastes incredible when used in chicken soup, shrimp stir-fry, or as a morning wake-you-up facial scrub. Kidding on that last one. Don't do that.

# Grilled “Lobster” Rolls with Old Bay Potato Chips

Okay, okay, they’re not made from lobster. They’re made from shrimp. But if you love spending gobs of money on seafood and cutting up your hands taking apart a whole lobster, by all means, go big. Just don’t skip the homemade chips.

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## WHAT YOU’LL NEED:

- 2 cups canola oil, plus 1 Tbsp
- 2 lb shrimp, peeled and deveined
- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- 2 scallions, thinly sliced
- 1 russet or sweet potato, peeled
  - old bay seasoning, to taste
- 8 Boston lettuce leaves
- 8 split-top rolls, or hot dog rolls
- ½ lemon, cut into wedges

1. In a grill pan over medium-high, heat the 1 Tbsp canola oil. When the oil is hot, add the shrimp and cook till pink, about 2 minutes per side. Transfer the shrimp to a cutting board, roughly chop the shrimp, and toss in a large bowl with the mayo and scallions. Place in the fridge to cool.
2. Over a large bowl of cold water, using a vegetable peeler, peel thin, chip-size pieces of the potato. Drain the water and set the chips aside.
3. In a large nonstick pan over medium, heat the 2 cups canola oil. When the oil shimmers, add 1 chip. If it sizzles immediately, the oil is ready. Carefully add a large handful of chips and cook, stirring occasionally, until golden and crispy, about 5 minutes. Using a slotted

spoon, transfer the chips to a plate lined with paper towels to drain. Season with Old Bay.

4. To assemble the sandwich, tuck a lettuce leaf into a roll and fill with shrimp salad. Repeat with the remaining ingredients. Serve with Old Bay chips and lemon wedges to squeeze over the sandwiches.

Feeds 8. *Nutrition per serving: 300 calories, 23 g protein, 36 g carbohydrates (5 g fiber), 8 g fat*

▶ **A MAN, A PANTRY, A PLAN: OLD BAY SEASONING**

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Travel anywhere in the Baltimore area and you can smell this stuff in the air. It's a delightful balance of celery salt, spicy red pepper, and paprika. Sprinkle it on oven fries (or home fries), shake it atop popcorn, or try it with freshly grilled summer sweet corn. A few uses are all it takes to start jonesing for the stuff.

# The Fish Mac

This sandwich is inspired by an iconic burger from a global burger chain that cannot be named due to legal concerns. It features one all-cod patty, special sauce, no cheese, lettuce, pickles, onions, on a sesame seed bun. Lovin' it?

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 Tbsp mayonnaise
- 1 tsp ketchup
- 1 tsp dill relish
- 1 tsp canola oil
- 1 (4 oz) skinless cod fillet
- 1 sesame-seeded hamburger bun
- 1 tsp minced white onion
- ¼ cup shredded cabbage
- 4 dill pickle slices

1. In a small bowl, stir together the mayo, ketchup, and relish. Set aside.
  2. In a small nonstick pan, heat the oil over medium-high. Pat the fish dry with paper towels and season both sides with salt and pepper. Add the fish and cook until firm, about 3 minutes per side.
  3. To assemble the sandwich, slather the sauce on the bottom bun, top with the onion, cabbage, pickles, fish, and the top bun.
- Feeds 1. *Nutrition per serving: 390 calories, 30 g protein, 25 g carbohydrates (4 g fiber), 19 g fat*



# Two-Pan Cheddar, Prosciutto, and Pear Pressed Sandwiches

Do you know why those fancy panini press contraptions cost so much? There's a sucker's fee built in. If you're heating a sandwich in a pan, all you need to press it with is (you guessed it) another pan.

## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 Tbsp butter, softened
- 4 slices whole grain bread, sliced ½" thick
- 4 slices pear (⅛" thick; anjou variety recommended)
- 2 slices prosciutto
- 1 cup grated sharp cheddar

**1.** Butter 1 side of each bread slice. Place a slice, buttered side down, on a plate. Top with 2 slices of pear, 1 slice of prosciutto, and ½ cup of cheese, followed by the other bread slice, butter facing up. Repeat with the other sandwich.

**2.** In a large nonstick pan over medium-low heat, add both sandwiches. Cook until the underside of the bread is golden brown, 3 to 5 minutes. Using a fish spatula, flip the sandwich. Then place a cast-iron pan atop the sandwiches and press down. Cook until the cheese is melted and the underside of the bread is golden brown, about 2 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board, slice in half, and serve. Feeds 2. *Nutrition per serving: 473 calories, 26 g protein, 31 g carbohydrates (5 g fiber), 28 g fat*

### ► WHY'S THAT?

“Can’t I just crank the heat on this thing and not have to wait, like, 10 minutes for a sandwich?” you may ask. You could. But then you’d miss out on one of the pure joys of low heat: cheese



crunchies. These little fragments of manna develop when melted cheese hits the pan and gradually sizzles to crispy glory. The choice is up to you, buddy.



# Loaded Sweet Potatoes

You can do better than sports bar potato skins. These superior taters swap the neon-orange chemical sludge that is cheez whiz for something in nature that's orange. Cayenne brings the heat and the lime juice adds twang. The bacon stays, though. Because bacon.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 2 strips bacon
- 2 medium sweet potatoes
- 2 Tbsp sour cream
  - juice from ½ lime
- 2 scallions, thinly sliced
- 2 pinches ground cayenne

1. Preheat your oven to 400°F. In a large cast-iron pan over medium heat, crisp the bacon, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a plate lined with paper towels to drain. Remove the pan from the heat and allow to cool slightly.
2. Place the sweet potatoes in the same pan and brush with bacon fat. Place the entire pan in the oven and bake until the potatoes are fork-tender, about 45 minutes. Carefully remove the pan from the oven and transfer a potato each to a serving plate. With a paring knife, carefully split each potato in half.
3. In a small bowl, stir together the sour cream and lime juice until smooth. Drizzle this mixture atop the sweet potatoes. Top with the scallions, crumbled bacon, and cayenne.

Feeds 2. *Nutrition per serving: 496 calories, 12 g protein, 52 g carbohydrates (9 g fiber), 27 g fat*

# Sausage and Peppers Sandwich

This is the sort of sandwich that makes you kick back your chair and pat your belly. Or, if you're lucky enough to have rock-hard abs, it'll make you pat those, too. Sausage-and-peppers traditionalists will note this recipe includes banana peppers, not green bell peppers. That's because no one likes green bell peppers. *No one.*

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 6 whole wheat sandwich rolls, split but not severed
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 lb Italian sausage (6 links)
- ½ onion, sliced
- 1 red bell pepper, seeded and sliced
- ½ cup banana pepper rings (hot or mild, your call)
- 1 (15 oz) can crushed tomatoes
  - freshly grated parmesan, for serving

1. In a cast-iron pan over medium heat, toast the rolls cut side down, 2 to 4 minutes. Transfer to a plate.
2. In the same pan, add the olive oil, followed by the sausage. Sear on all sides, about 4 minutes total. Scoot the sausage to the edges of the pan. Add the onion and both peppers to the center and cook till tender, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the tomatoes, adjust the heat to medium-low, and simmer until the sausage cooks through, about 10 minutes.
3. To serve, transfer a sausage and some peppers to a roll. Spoon on some sauce and top with a tablespoon or so of Parmesan. Allow to melt and serve.

Feeds 6. *Nutrition per serving (with 1 Tbsp cheese): 316 calories, 22 g protein, 33 g carbohydrates (6 g fiber), 12 g fat*



# Mac and Cheese with Ham and Peas

Maybe you're the kind of person who believes that the only thing that belongs in mac and cheese is a fork. That's cool. But adding diced ham studs the gooeyness with salty-chewy surprises. And adding peas provides a pop of sweetness. Skip these ingredients if you want, but then you also miss out on the opportunity to freestyle rap.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 lb elbow macaroni
- 4 Tbsp butter
- ¼ cup flour
- 1½ cups whole milk
- 1½ cups heavy cream
- 1 cup grated cheddar
- ½ cup grated parmesan
- ½ cup diced ham (about 3 to 4 oz)
- 1 cup frozen peas

1. In a large cast-iron pan of boiling water, add the macaroni and cook 1 minute less than package instructions. Drain and reserve.
2. Preheat your oven to 400°F. In the same pan over medium heat, melt the butter. Gradually add the flour, stirring with a wooden spoon constantly, until the mixture thickens and turns golden in color, 2 to 4 minutes. Then gradually add the milk and heavy cream, stirring constantly, until the mixture thickens and begins to bubble, 2 to 4 minutes. Add the Cheddar and ¼ cup of the Parmesan. Cook, stirring, until all the cheese has melted, about 1 minute.
3. Add the macaroni, ham, and peas to the cheese mixture. Season with salt and pepper. Top with the remaining Parmesan. Using oven mitts, carefully transfer the pan to the oven. Bake until the top is browned, about 25 minutes. Using oven mitts, carefully remove the

pan from the oven. Allow to cool at least 10 minutes before serving.  
Feeds 8. *Nutrition per serving: 559 calories, 19 g protein, 51 g carbohydrates (3 g fiber), 32 g fat*

# Pot Pan Roast

You don't need a pot to make pot roast, which is actually a bigger whoop than you might think. Pots are big and cumbersome. Pots are a pain in the tuchis to wash and dry. Pots hate puppies. Try this if you're skeptical. (And spare a puppy.)

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

2 lb grass-fed chuck beef, cut into bite-size pieces, patted dry

1 Tbsp flour

1 Tbsp canola oil

3 cups low-sodium beef stock

1 cup dry red wine

1 Tbsp tomato paste

8 baby potatoes, quartered

1 cup baby carrots

1 cup pearl onions

leaves from 2 sprigs fresh thyme

1. In a large bowl, toss the beef with the flour.
2. In a large cast-iron pan over medium, heat the canola oil. Working in batches, sear the beef on all sides, about 5 minutes total, and transfer to a plate lined with paper towels to drain.
3. In the same pan, add the stock, wine, and tomato paste. Using a wooden spoon, scrape up the browned bits on the bottom of the pan. Return the beef to the pan, reduce the heat to medium-low, and simmer, occasionally skimming the surface of the liquid, until the beef is tender, about 1 hour.
4. Add the potatoes, carrots, and onions. Put a lid on the pan and cook until the carrots are tender, about 30 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Serve topped with thyme leaves.



Feeds 6. *Nutrition per serving: 340 calories, 38 g protein, 18 g carbohydrates (2 g fiber), 9 g fat*

▶ **WHY'S THAT?**

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How come you have to flour the meat? Well, flour sucks moisture from the surface of the beef, and moisture can make the beef steam instead of sear. Seared beef is delicious. Steamed beef, on the other hand, is about as tasty as it sounds.

# Pan-“Fried” Calamari with Sweet Chili Sauce

You don't need to own a deep fryer to make squid taste great. In fact, you don't even need to bread the little cephalopods. Crank the heat on a cast-iron pan, blister the suckers till tender, and give them a quick dunk in a simple dipping sauce before popping them into your mouth.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

¼ cup sweet chili sauce

1 scallion, thinly sliced

juice from ½ lime, plus ½ lime, cut into wedges

1 lb calamari, body sliced into rings, and tentacles, patted dry

1 tsp canola oil

pinch ground cayenne

2 Tbsp chopped cilantro

1. In a small bowl, mix the chili sauce, scallion, and lime juice. Set aside.
2. In a large bowl, toss the calamari with the oil, cayenne, and a big pinch each of salt and pepper.
3. Preheat a large cast-iron pan to medium-high. When the pan is hot, add the calamari. Cook, stirring occasionally with a wooden spoon, until blackened in spots and cooked through, 5 to 7 minutes.
4. Transfer the calamari to a plate and top with cilantro. Serve with lime wedges and the dipping sauce.

Feeds 4, as an appetizer. *Nutrition per serving: 119 calories, 18 g protein, 5 g carbohydrates (0 g fiber), 3 g fat*

# Red Potato Picnic Salad

This summertime family-reunion staple requires just five ingredients to taste spectacular. If you want to swap out the mayonnaise for something you think is “healthier,” by all means. Just remember this is family we’re talking about here. Do you really want to explain to great aunt Edna why you put greek yogurt in the potato salad?

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## WHAT YOU’LL NEED:

5 medium red, potatoes, cut into bite-size cubes

3 celery ribs, with leaves, finely chopped

2 Tbsp minced chives

2 Tbsp stone-ground mustard

¼ cup mayo

**1.** In a large pan of boiling water, add the potatoes. Cook until fork-tender, about 10 minutes. Drain and transfer to a large bowl to cool, about 10 minutes.

**2.** Add the remaining ingredients, mix well, and season to taste with salt and pepper. Refrigerate and serve cold.

Feeds 6, as a side. *Nutrition per serving: 194 calories, 4 g protein, 29 g carbohydrates (3 g fiber), 8 g fat*



# Charred Radicchio Salad with Pomegranate, Blue Cheese, and Walnuts

Radicchio, for the uninitiated, is that purple stuff some people pick around in salad mixes. It's bitter, yes, but grilling it mellows that bitterness. Adding sweet-tart pomegranate seeds, creamy-funky cheese, and toasted-roasty nuts makes you forget about any of your hesitations altogether.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

¼ cup walnuts, toasted

2 Tbsp olive oil

1 head radicchio, quartered

¼ cup pomegranate seeds

¼ cup crumbled blue cheese

2 Tbsp chopped parsley

2 tsp balsamic vinegar

- 1.** In a small nonstick pan over medium-low heat, add the walnuts. Toast, stirring occasionally, until aromatic, 3 to 5 minutes. Set aside.
- 2.** In a large cast-iron pan over medium-high, heat 1 Tbsp olive oil. Add the radicchio and char on all sides, about 5 minutes total. Divide the radicchio between 2 serving plates. Top each plate with pomegranate seeds, walnuts, blue cheese, and parsley. Drizzle on the balsamic and remaining olive oil. Season with salt and pepper. Feeds 2. *Nutrition per serving: 303 calories, 6 g protein, 4 g carbohydrates (1 g fiber), 28 g fat*



# Cream of “Roasted” Tomato and Red Pepper Soup with Croutons

Canned tomato soup always tastes, well, a little like the can it comes in. Trade that aluminum undertone for a subtle smokiness. Team up this soup with the [Two-Pan Cheddar, Prosciutto, and Pear Pressed Sandwiches](#) and you’ve just won lunch.

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## WHAT YOU’LL NEED:

- 1 (3") baguette, sliced
- 1 Tbsp olive oil, plus more for brushing and drizzling
- 6 medium tomatoes, stem NUBS removed
- 2 red bell peppers, seeded and chopped
- heavy cream, for drizzling

1. Lightly brush the sliced baguette on both sides with olive oil. In a large cast-iron pan over medium-high heat, toast the baguette till golden brown and slightly charred, 1 minute a side. Cut the toast into cubes. Set the croutons aside.
2. In the same pan over medium-high, add the 1 Tbsp oil. When the oil shimmers, add the tomatoes and peppers. Cook, turning occasionally, till blackened in spots, about 5 minutes. Turn the heat to low, place a lid on the pan, and cook until the tomatoes are very soft, about 15 minutes.
3. Transfer the mixture to a blender or food processor. Puree until smooth. Season with salt and pepper. Transfer the soup to bowls and top with a drizzle each of olive oil and heavy cream. Top with croutons and serve.

Feeds 4. *Nutrition per serving: 228 calories, 6 g protein, 29 g carbohydrates (4 g fiber), 10 g fat*

# Chicken Quesadilla with Roasted Red Salsa

This is one of those quick-as-heck weeknight comfort-food meals that make you so much happier about life than hitting a fast-food joint on the way home from work. The salsa makes more than you need for one quesadilla, but you'll find a way to use it up.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

½ tsp canola oil

1 qt grape tomatoes

½ medium yellow onion, roughly chopped

1 jalapeño, halved (seeds optional)

juice from ½ lime

1 cup (about ½ bunch) chopped cilantro (stems and leaves)

2 (6") whole wheat flour tortillas

½ cup shredded rotisserie chicken

¼ cup shredded Oaxacan, Chihuahua, or mozzarella cheese

- 1.** In a large nonstick pan over medium-high, heat the oil. Add the tomatoes, onion, and jalapeño. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the ingredients are blackened and the tomatoes are slightly softened, about 10 minutes.
- 2.** In a blender or food processor, add the ingredients from the pan. Add the lime juice and cilantro. Pulse until slightly chunky. Transfer to a storage container or serving bowl and season to taste with salt and pepper.
- 3.** In the same pan over medium-low, add 1 tortilla, followed by the chicken, cheese, and the remaining tortilla. Cook until the bottom tortilla browns and the cheese begins to melt, 2 to 4 minutes. Flip. (If anything falls out, tuck it back in. It happens.) Cook until the cheese is completely melted, about 2 minutes. Slice into wedges. Serve with the salsa.



Feeds 1. *Nutrition per serving: 447 calories, 37 g protein, 39 g carbohydrates (20 g fiber), 16 g fat*

# Pork Chop Cubanos

A traditional Cubano uses leftover roast pork, not pork chops, but a legitimate question for you: who ever has leftover roast pork? Chops, pounded thin, carry the same piggy punch and cook quick in a hot pan. This means that you can have a cubano, whenever you want, in about 10 minutes. Get ready to start eating a lot of Cubanos.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 2 Tbsp butter
- 1 tsp canola oil
- 2 boneless pork chops, pounded about ¼" thin
- 2 (6") pieces of Cubano loaf or 2 Italian hoagie rolls
- 2 Tbsp yellow mustard
- 2 Tbsp mayonnaise
- 4 slices swiss cheese
- 4 slices deli ham
- 4 sandwich-style dill pickle slices (the kind that are cut lengthwise)

1. In a small pan over low heat, melt the butter. Keep on low.
2. In a large nonstick pan over medium heat, add the oil. Season the pork chops on both sides with salt and pepper. When the oil is hot, add the chops and sear until cooked through, 3 to 4 minutes a side. Transfer to a plate lined with paper towels.
3. Adjust the heat of the same pan to low. Brush the cut sides of the bread slices or rolls with melted butter and place them cut side down in the pan. Cook until lightly browned, 1 to 2 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board.
4. Brush 1 half of the inside of each roll with 1 Tbsp mustard. Brush each other half with 1 Tbsp mayo. Layer on the cheese, ham, pickles, and pork chops. Close the sandwiches and, using a spatula, transfer them back to the pan. Cook over medium-low until well browned,

crisped, and melted, 2 to 3 minutes a side, pressing down with the spatula often. Lift the sandwiches out of the pan and back to the cutting board. Slice in half and serve.

Feeds 4. *Nutrition per serving: 534 calories, 37 g protein, 39 g carbohydrates (2 g fiber), 25 g fat*



# Eggplant and Zucchini Lasagna

This is one of those weekend-project meals that require some handiwork and patience to see through—sort of like cleaning your garage or raking your yard. Except that unlike cleaning your garage or raking your yard, you're left with a week's worth of cheesy vegetable lasagna that improves in flavor as the days go by. The garage and yard can wait.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ¼ white onion, diced
- 1 (28 oz) can whole tomatoes, drained
- 2 cups ricotta
  - zest from ½ lemon
- 6 basil leaves, chopped, plus more for serving
  - leaves from 3 parsley stems, chopped
- 1 small eggplant, thinly sliced
- 1 small zucchini, thinly sliced
- 8 oz fresh mozzarella, sliced

**1.** In a large cast-iron pan, add the olive oil, garlic, and onion. Heat over medium-high and cook until the onion is golden, 3 to 5 minutes. Add the tomatoes and cook, stirring occasionally, till slightly thickened, 5 to 10 minutes.

**2.** Meanwhile, in a large bowl, mix the ricotta, lemon zest, basil, and parsley. Season the mixture with salt and freshly ground pepper. Set aside.

**3.** Preheat your oven to 400°F. Scoop half of the sauce out of the pan and into a small bowl. On top of the sauce in the pan, layer half of the

eggplant and zucchini, half the ricotta mixture, the rest of the vegetables, the rest of the ricotta, the rest of the sauce, and, finally, the mozzarella.

**4.** Place a lid on the pan and bake until a knife inserted into the layers slides easily through, 20 to 30 minutes. Using an oven mitt, carefully remove the lid and bake the lasagna until the cheese is bubbly and slightly browned, 5 to 10 minutes more.

**5.** Using 2 oven mitts, carefully remove the pan from the oven (it's heavy) and place on a trivet to cool for at least 10 minutes before slicing. Serve topped with more fresh basil.

Feeds 6. *Nutrition per serving: 313 calories, 21 g protein, 16 g carbohydrates (4 g fiber), 20 g fat*



# Honey-Sriracha-Lime Chicken Wings

Crispy, spicy, addictive wings do not have to come from a deep fryer. They can come from a cast-iron pan and the high-heat function of your oven. You could switch up the flavor here, if you want, but the peppery heat is like an army of tiny hellions marching across your mouth. You don't want to miss that, do you?

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1½ lb chicken wings
- 2 tsp canola oil
- 2 Tbsp Sriracha
- 1 Tbsp honey
- juice from 1 lime
- 1 Tbsp sesame seeds

**1.** Preheat your oven to 500°F. In a large bowl, toss the wings with the oil and ½ tsp each of salt and pepper. In a large cast-iron pan, add the wings, leaving space so they don't touch. Place the pan in the oven. Roast the wings for 10 minutes, carefully flip them with tongs, and continue to roast until cooked through, about 10 more minutes. Set the oven to broil. Cook until the wings are crisp, about 5 minutes. Wearing an oven mitt, transfer the pan from the oven to a heatproof surface.

**2.** In a large bowl, mix the sriracha, honey, lime juice, and sesame seeds until well combined. Add the chicken wings and toss well to coat. Serve immediately, drizzled with any remaining sauce.

Feeds 4, as an appetizer. *Nutrition per serving: 437 calories, 32 g protein, 7 g carbohydrates (0 g fiber), 31 g fat*





# Browned-Butter Gnocchi with Butternut Squash and Fried Sage

If you whip this up on a date night or for a festive gathering, people are going to think you're real debonair. Upon crunching into a fried sage leaf, one of your dining companions might exclaim, "why, this crisp herb is quite possibly the finest leaf-based creation I believe I have ever had the pleasure of devouring! It's quite toothsome!" Don't tell him or her how easy it is. Or that you used premade gnocchi. Or that they're wearing a powdered wig.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

¼ cup canola oil

leaves from 2 fresh sage stems

1 lb gnocchi

2 Tbsp butter

1 lb peeled, chopped butternut squash (about 2 cups)

2 Tbsp freshly grated parmesan

- 1.** In a small nonstick pan over medium-high, heat the oil. When it shimmers, add the sage and fry until crisp, 1 to 2 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the sage leaves to a plate lined with paper towels to drain.
- 2.** In a large nonstick pan of boiling salted water, cook the gnocchi according to package instructions. Carefully drain.
- 3.** In the same pan over medium, add the butter. Cook, swirling the pan occasionally, until the butter is slightly browned and smells nutty, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the squash and cook till browned and fork-tender, about 5 minutes.
- 4.** Return the gnocchi to the pan and stir well. Serve in bowls topped with the fried sage and Parmesan.

Feeds 2. *Nutrition per serving: 571 calories, 10 g protein, 67 g carbohydrates (7 g fiber), 31 g fat*

▶ **HOLY \$@%! KITCHEN TRICK: THE PASTA PAN-BOIL!**

Huge, deep pots of water take a long time to boil. Wide, shallow pans of water take less time to boil. Just make sure you're extra careful transporting the pan from stovetop to sink. Minimize the risk by covering it with a lid while transporting. And always don oven mitts.

# Spaghetti Carbonara (Poached-Style)

*Carbonara* roughly translates to “an excuse to eat bacon and eggs whenever you want.” Roughly. This recipe twists the traditional version slightly by topping the pile-o-pasta with a poached egg instead of scrambling in raw eggs. It’s a smidge fussier, but it isn’t only for show. Because you break the yolk at the table, you minimize the risk of the eggs going gummy on you before the first fork twirl.

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## WHAT YOU’LL NEED:

3 oz whole wheat angel hair pasta

1 egg

1 strip bacon, chopped

1 Tbsp freshly grated parmesan

minced parsley, for garnish

**1.** In a large pan of boiling salted water, cook the pasta according to package instructions. Carefully drain.

**2.** Crack the egg into a mug. In a small pan of simmering water, slowly tip the egg in the mug into the water. Cook, swirling the water gently, until the whites are firm, 3 to 4 minutes.

**3.** In the same large pan over medium heat, cook the bacon till crisp, about 5 minutes. Drain the fat. Adjust the heat to medium-low, add the pasta, mix well, and top with the poached egg, Parmesan, parsley, and black pepper. Serve immediately.

Feeds 1. *Nutrition per serving: 456 calories, 22 g protein, 65 g carbohydrates (8 g fiber), 12 g fat*

# Everything Grilled Chicken Caesar Salad

It's a grill pan party and everyone is invited! The chicken is invited and it gets grilled! The romaine lettuce RSVP'd "yes" and it gets a grilling! Even the avocado shows up and leaves with char marks! You may have extra dressing left when it's all over. Consider it a parting gift.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- ¼ cup olive oil, plus 1 Tbsp
- ¼ cup freshly grated parmesan
  - juice from ½ lemon, plus ½ lemon, cut into 2 wedges
- 1 Tbsp dijon mustard
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 2 anchovy fillets, finely chopped
- 2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, pounded to ½" thin
- 1 avocado, pitted, quartered, and peeled
- 2 heads romaine hearts, halved lengthwise

- 1.** In a measuring cup or small bowl, mix the ¼ cup olive oil, Parmesan, lemon juice, Dijon, garlic, and anchovy fillets. Set aside.
- 2.** In a large grill pan over medium-high, heat the remaining 1 Tbsp olive oil. Season the chicken on both sides with salt and pepper. Add the chicken and grill until cooked through, 10 to 12 minutes, flipping once halfway through. Transfer the chicken to a plate.
- 3.** In the same pan, add the lemon wedges and avocado wedges. Grill until marks appear, 1 minute per side. Transfer a lemon wedge and 2 avocado wedges each to 2 serving plates.
- 4.** In the same pan, working in batches, add the romaine, cut side down, and cook till slightly charred, about 1 minute. Transfer a full lettuce head onto each plate.
- 5.** Slice the chicken and place it atop the romaine. Spoon on the dressing. Eat with a knife and fork, squeezing the grilled lemon over

everything.

Feeds 2. *Nutrition per serving: 662 calories, 34 g protein, 17 g carbohydrates (7 g fiber), 52 g fat*

▶ **HOLY \$@%! KITCHEN TRICK: THE INCREDIBLE MEASURING CUP MIXING BOWL!**

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Doing dishes sucks. So do one less dish: Pour the dressing ingredients into a measuring cup and whisk them up. Heck, pour the dressing from the cup at the table if you're not pretentious. This technique also works well for other dressings and sauces.



# Extra-Bacony BALTs

Every time you throw out bacon grease, a pony cries. Bacon grease is a lovely, luscious cooking fat that guides home fries, bitter greens, and seared scallops to higher planes of existence. It also works its magic on grilled bread, which, here, bookends the best BLT with avocado you've ever had.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 4 slices thick-cut bacon
- 2 slices whole grain bread, cut ½" thick
- ½ avocado
- 1 thick tomato slice cut from a large tomato
- 1 large leaf Boston lettuce

1. In a large cast-iron pan, add the bacon and turn the heat to medium. Cook, flipping the bacon occasionally, until crisped, 8 to 10 minutes. Transfer the bacon to a plate lined with paper towels to drain.
2. Carefully drain the bacon fat from the pan into a bowl to cool and keep for another use. Return the same pan, still greased with a sheen of fat, to the burner and adjust the heat to medium-low. Add the bread and cook, turning occasionally, until crisped and a little charred in places, about 5 minutes.
3. Transfer 1 bread slice to a cutting board. Using the back of a fork, mash the avocado onto the bread. Snap the bacon pieces in half and arrange on top, followed by the tomato, lettuce, and the second slice of bread.

Feeds 1. *Nutrition per serving: 493 calories, 24 g protein, 45 g carbohydrates (9 g fiber), 26 g fat*



▶ **HOLY \$@%! KITCHEN TRICK: THE BETTER BACON SWITCH-UP!**

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Start bacon in a cold pan for more evenly done slices. As the pan warms, the bacon fat slowly renders from each slice, resulting in fewer sputtering and flying gobs of hot grease than if you were to toss a few rashers onto an already hot pan.



# Grilled Cauliflower Steaks with Tahini and Herb Sauce

If you're a cowboy, you may bet your entire cattle ranch that a cauliflower steak doesn't come close to a real rib eye in terms of flavor. You'd be right, partner, but you'd also be wrong. It's not that thick-cut cauliflower hard seared on a grill pan replaces the need for beef. It's just different. Topped with creamy tahini, fresh parsley, herbs, and nutty spices, it's like a rootin'-tootin' saloon brawl of tastes and textures happening right on your tongue. Yee-haw.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 2 Tbsp minced parsley
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ tsp crushed red-pepper flakes
- 1 tsp olive oil, plus more for brushing and drizzling
- ¼ cup tahini
  - juice from 1½ lemons
- 1 head cauliflower, cut into two 2"-thick steaks along the stem (reserve florets for another use)
- ½ tsp ground cumin

- 1.** In a small bowl, combine the parsley, garlic, crushed red pepper, and 1 tsp olive oil. Mix well and set aside.
- 2.** In a medium bowl, combine the tahini and lemon juice. If the mixture is too thick, gradually add water and stir until it isn't gloppy. Set aside.
- 3.** Brush the cauliflower steaks on both sides with olive oil. Season both sides with salt, pepper, and cumin. Heat a large cast-iron pan over medium. When the pan begins to smoke, add the cauliflower and cook till blackened in spots and tender throughout, about 4 minutes per side. Serve topped with tahini sauce, herb sauce, and sea salt.

Feeds 2. *Nutrition per serving: 231 calories, 9 g protein, 18 g carbohydrates (5 g fiber), 17 g fat*

▶ **A MAN, A PANTRY, A PLAN: TAHINI**

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This creamy, peanut-butter-like paste is made from sesame seeds. It has that same subtle roasted flavor, which makes it great stirred into hummus or as a dip for raw red bell peppers and the leftover cauliflower florets in this very recipe.



# Grilled Greek Salad Pitas

There are few givens on this planet: gravity, the tides, and that whenever you order a greek salad, it will pretty much be the same unremarkable combination of ingredients. Now grill those same ingredients and mojo starts to happen. The pita carries a hit of smoke. The tomatoes sweeten. The cheese—whoa, Nelly—the cheese. One bite will turn your world upside down.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 4 whole wheat pocket pitas
- 8 oz block Cotija, halved lengthwise
- ½ cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- ½ romaine heart, chopped
- ¼ cup very thinly sliced red onion
- ¼ cup pitted kalamata olives
- ½ English cucumber, peeled, seeded, and diced
- leaves from 2 stems oregano, roughly chopped
- 1 tsp olive oil

1. Preheat your oven to 200°F. In a large dry cast-iron grill pan over medium-high, heat the pitas until grill marks appear, about 2 minutes on each side. Wrap in foil and reserve in the oven.
2. In the same pan over medium-high, add the cheese. Grill until marks appear, 2 to 4 minutes on each side. Transfer to a cutting board and roughly chop.
3. In the same pan over medium-high, add the tomatoes and cook until just blistered, about 2 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat.
4. In a large bowl, toss everything except the pitas with the olive oil. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Slice the pitas in half. Stuff the mixture into the pita pockets.

Feeds 4. *Nutrition per serving: 446 calories, 30 g protein, 31 g carbohydrates (5 g fiber), 25 g fat*

▶ **WHY'S THAT?**

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The keen of sight will notice that this recipe uses Cotija cheese, which is Mexican, not feta, which is Greek. That's because feta liquefies into a mess on the grill pan. Cotija, which has a similar salty flavor, holds its own.

# Sloppy Grassy Joes

You're never too old for a Sloppy Joe. You are, however, too old for plopping canned mystery meat into a pot to reheat and eat. This improved version builds its base with herbaceous grass-fed beef, dumps in a bushel of vegetables, and turns to brown sugar for a slight sweetness. Ready the napkins.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 tsp olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ large yellow onion, chopped
- 2 medium carrots, diced
- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 1 lb ground grass-fed beef
- 1 Tbsp tomato paste
- 1 (28 oz) can crushed tomatoes
- 1 Tbsp brown sugar
  - leaves from 2 large thyme sprigs
- 6 hamburger rolls
  - shredded cheddar (optional)

**1.** In a large nonstick pan, add the oil, garlic, and onion. Turn the heat to medium-high and cook till aromatic, 1 to 2 minutes. Add the carrots and bell pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, till slightly softened, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the beef, and cook, stirring occasionally, till browned, 8 to 10 minutes (if you need to drain any fat at this point, carefully do so).

**2.** Adjust the heat to medium-low. Add the tomato paste and stir well. Add the crushed tomatoes, brown sugar, and thyme. Cook, stirring



occasionally, until thickened, 15 to 20 minutes. Season to taste with salt, pepper, and additional brown sugar, if desired, to taste.

**3.** Serve piled high on the rolls with cheese, if you want.

Feeds 6. *Nutrition per serving (with 1 Tbsp cheese): 347 calories, 23 g protein, 37 g carbohydrates (5 g fiber), 14 g fat*

# Party Toast, Two Ways

Yes, it's grilled bread with toppings. But if you call it "party toast" it'll go faster at the actual party. No one wants to cart home their uneaten potluck offering on an after-party walk of shame.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

1 (foot-long) baguette, sliced diagonally into ½" thick pieces

olive oil, for brushing

**1.** Lightly brush the baguette pieces with oil. In a large cast-iron pan over medium-high heat, working in batches, toast the baguette pieces until golden brown and slightly charred, about 1 minute a side. Set aside.

**2.** Spoon one of the toppings below onto the toast.

Feeds 6, as an appetizer.

## +Tomato-Herb

In a medium bowl, mix 1 lb cherry tomatoes (mixed colors are nice), quartered; 1 small shallot, minced; 1 tsp olive oil; the leaves from 2 thyme sprigs; and the leaves from 2 parsley sprigs, chopped. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Spoon atop toasted baguette slices and serve. *Nutrition per 2 pieces: 202 calories, 9 g protein, 41 g carbohydrates (3 g fiber), 1 g fat*

## +Drunken Prunes with Blue Cheese and Rosemary

**1.** In a small nonstick pan, combine 1 cup brandy, ½ cup sugar, and ½ cup water. Bring to a boil over high heat and then reduce to low

heat and add 10 pitted, chopped prunes. Cook, stirring occasionally, until syrupy, about 10 minutes. Allow to cool. (They'll keep for about 4 days in the fridge.)

**2.** In a medium bowl, toss the prunes with the leaves from 2 sprigs of rosemary, chopped;  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup crumbled blue cheese; and salt and pepper to taste. Spoon atop toasted baguette slices and serve.

*Nutrition per 2 pieces: 333 calories, 11 g protein, 57 g carbohydrates (3 g fiber), 3 g fat*



# Crab Cakes with Asparagus

Premade supermarket crab cakes load up on bread crumbs at the expense of the good stuff. It makes sense for the supermarket: crab costs them cash. It doesn't make sense for you. Shape your own patties.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 egg white, whisked
- 1 Tbsp plain Greek yogurt (2%)
- 1 Tbsp chopped dill, plus a little more for garnish
- ½ Tbsp dijon mustard
- ½ Tbsp lemon juice, plus ½ lemon, cut into wedges
- ⅛ tsp paprika
  - pinch ground cayenne
- 8 oz jumbo lump crabmeat
- ⅛ cup bread crumbs
- 2 Tbsp canola oil
- 1 bunch asparagus, woody ends trimmed

- 1.** In a large bowl, combine the egg white, yogurt, dill, Dijon, ½ Tbsp lemon juice, paprika, cayenne, and a pinch each of salt and pepper. Mix well. Gently fold in the crab and bread crumbs. Shape into 2 patties and refrigerate for ½ hour.
- 2.** In a large cast-iron pan over medium, heat 1 Tbsp canola oil. Add the crab cakes and cook till golden brown, about 3 minutes a side. Transfer each to a serving plate.
- 3.** In the same pan, add the remaining 1 Tbsp canola oil. Add the asparagus, adjust the heat to medium-high, and cook until slightly charred, 3 to 5 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve

beside each crab cake. Squeeze on fresh lemon juice from the wedges.

*Feeds 2. Nutrition per serving: 249 calories, 24 g protein, 4 g carbohydrates (1 g fiber), 15 g fat*



# Seared Scallops with Grapefruit, Radish, Avocado Salad

Pitied be the scallops swimming beneath a blanket of cream sauce tangled in tasteless pasta. Those mollusks, mighty in briny flavor, have been strong-armed by overwhelming amounts of butter and salt. Honor those forgotten scallops with the bright, fresh ingredients in this dish.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 Tbsp canola oil
- ½ lb dry-packed sea scallops, patted dry with paper towels
- 1 grapefruit, peeled, sliced into circles
- 4 radishes, thinly sliced, plus 4 radish leaves, thinly sliced
- 1 avocado, thinly sliced
- olive oil, for serving

**1.** In a cast-iron pan over high heat, add the canola oil. When the oil shimmers, season both sides of the scallops with salt and pepper and add them to the pan. Sear, untouched, until a crust forms on the bottom of the scallops, 1 to 2 minutes. Using tongs, flip and repeat. Set aside to rest.

**2.** On a serving plate, layer half the grapefruit, radishes, avocado, scallops, and radish leaves. Top with a drizzle of olive oil. Season with salt and pepper, if needed. Repeat on another plate.

Feeds 2. *Nutrition per serving: 439 calories, 39 g protein, 26 g carbohydrates (7 g fiber), 21 g fat*



# Beer Mussels

This giant pile of fresh shellfish only uses half a brewski to cook to juicy perfection. Which means that you'll have another half a beer left over after cooking. You'll know what to do.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 2 strips bacon, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- ¼ white onion, diced
- 4 plum tomatoes, diced
- 2 thyme sprigs
- ½ bottle lager beer
- 1 lb mussels, scrubbed and debearded
- crusty bread, toasted, for serving

1. In a large cast-iron pan over medium heat, add the bacon and cook till crispy, 3 to 5 minutes.
2. Add the garlic and onion and cook, stirring constantly, till the onion is translucent, about 1 minute.
3. Add the tomatoes, thyme, beer, and mussels. Cook, covered, till the mussels open, 5 to 7 minutes. Serve immediately, with the bread for sopping up the sauce.

Feeds 2. *Nutrition (with 1 slice bread): 321 calories, 33 g protein, 25 g carbohydrates (3 g fiber), 8 g fat*

### ► WHY'S THAT?

Mussels require a little legwork before you cook them. Make sure you scrub them under cold water to remove grit, tossing mussels that are cracked or open. If you see a small tuft of hair sticking out from between the two shells, pull it up and away from the shell.

That's called debearding. It's only gross if you end up eating a beard.



# Steak 'n' Shrooms with Garlic Spinach

This is one of those recipes where you sizzle everything in the same pan—the rib eye, the mushrooms, the spinach, and even the steak sauce. If you're going for maximum efficiency, you could even eat the whole meal out of the pan, you savage.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 bone-in rib-eye steak
- 2 Tbsp canola oil
- ½ cup red wine
- 2 Tbsp butter
- 1 (6 oz) package mixed mushrooms (cremini, shiitake, oyster)
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 4 cups packed baby spinach

- 1.** Preheat a cast-iron pan to high. (Open a few windows and crank your oven vent to high—things are about to get smoky.) Liberally season both sides of the steak with salt and pepper. When the pan begins to smoke, add 1 Tbsp of the canola oil and swirl. Add the steak and sear, flipping every minute, for a total of 6 minutes for medium-rare. Transfer the steak to a plate.
- 2.** Remove the pan from the heat, add the wine to the pan, and using a wooden spoon, stir the wine, scraping up the browned bits clinging to the pan. Add the butter, stir until melted, and season lightly with salt and pepper. Pour into a small serving dish and set aside.
- 3.** Return the pan to medium-high heat. Add the mushrooms and cook, stirring frequently, adding a little more oil if the shrooms are too dry, until well browned, 5 to 7 minutes. Spoon the mushrooms over the steak.
- 4.** Remove the pan from the heat and add the remaining oil, the garlic, and spinach. Cook, stirring constantly, until just wilted, about 1

minute. Serve alongside the steak, with the sauce on the side.  
Feeds 2. *Nutrition per serving: 512 calories, 51 g protein, 3 g carbohydrates (1 g fiber), 34 g fat*



# Roasted Lemon-Rosemary Chicken and Potatoes

Every person on the planet should know how to make a great roast chicken. Not good. Great. To achieve greatness, massage the bird with olive oil to help crisp the skin, elevate the chicken on a bed of vegetables to help promote airflow, and douse everything with charred lemon to help make your mouth happy.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 lb red potatoes, cut into bite-size pieces
- 3 large carrots, cut into bite-size pieces
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 3 rosemary sprigs, leaves from 1 stripped and chopped
- 1 (3 to 3½ lb) chicken, giblet packet removed, patted dry
- 2 garlic cloves, smashed
- 1 lemon, halved

1. Preheat your oven to 475°F. In a large cast-iron pan, toss the potatoes and carrots with 1 Tbsp olive oil, the chopped rosemary, and salt and pepper. Set aside.
2. Rub the chicken inside and out with the remaining olive oil, plus salt and pepper, making sure to get underneath the skin. Stuff the cavity with the rosemary sprigs and garlic. Place the chicken and the lemon halves atop the vegetables.
3. Roast the chicken until the skin begins to brown, 20 to 25 minutes. Then lower the heat to 400°F and cook until a meat thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the leg registers 160°F. Using oven mitts, carefully remove the pan from the oven and rest on a heat-resistant surface, about 15 minutes.

4. Transfer the chicken to a cutting board to slice. Squeeze the charred lemon juice over the meat. Serve with the carrots and potatoes.

Feeds 4. *Nutrition per serving: 512 calories, 80 g protein, 8 g carbohydrates (2 g fiber), 17 g fat*



# Slightly Smoky Ratatouille

You know how mom always tells you to eat your vegetables? Make this dish and you'll shut her up for a few months.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 leek, tough green ends removed, chopped and rinsed well
- 1 small eggplant, chopped
- 1 small zucchini, chopped
- 1 small yellow squash, chopped
- 4 medium tomatoes, chopped
- 1 orange bell pepper, chopped
- 2 Tbsp chopped basil
- 1 Tbsp chopped oregano
- 1 tsp smoked paprika

**1.** In a large nonstick pan, add the oil, garlic, and leeks. Turn the heat to medium and cook, stirring occasionally, until the leeks are soft, 5 to 7 minutes.

**2.** Add the eggplant, zucchini, and squash. Mix well so that all the ingredients are coated in the oil. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the eggplant is softened, 5 to 7 minutes.

**3.** Add the tomatoes and bell pepper. Adjust the heat to medium-low. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the zucchini is fork-tender, 15 to 20 minutes.

**4.** Add the basil, oregano, and smoked paprika. Stir well. Season. Serve.

Feeds 4. *Nutrition per serving: 160 calories, 4 g protein, 21 g carbohydrates (7 g fiber), 8 g fat*



# Chicago Dogs

Oh, yikes. Look at that ingredients list, huh? You can do two things to simplify this recipe. One, you could use packaged hot dogs (filled with who-knows-what) instead of making your own. Two, you could dress the dogs in the old standbys of ketchup and mustard. Both decisions, however, will lead you away from a freshness-packed, crave-inducing, epiphany-evoking hot dog.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 lb ground turkey
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- 1 tsp paprika
- ¼ tsp onion powder
- 1 egg
- ½ cup bread crumbs
- 1 Tbsp canola oil
- 6 hot dog rolls
- ½ tomato, sliced into wedges
- ½ cucumber, sliced into wedges lengthwise
- ¼ cup sport peppers or sliced banana pepper rings
- ¼ cup Chicago relish or sweet relish
- ¼ medium white onion, minced
  - yellow mustard, to taste
  - celery seed, to taste

**1.** In a large bowl, add the turkey, garlic, both paprikas, onion powder, egg, bread crumbs, and a few pinches each of salt and pepper. Using your hands, mix everything until well combined. Then

roll the mixture into 6 hot dogs slightly longer than the buns. Transfer to a clean plate and refrigerate until firm, about 30 minutes.

**2.** In a large grill pan over medium heat, add the oil, brushing to coat. When the oil shimmers, add the hot dogs and grill, quarter-turning the dogs every 2 to 3 minutes, until well seared and a meat thermometer inserted into the thickest part of each dog reads 165°F, 10 to 15 minutes depending on the thickness of the dog. Transfer to a clean plate.

**3.** In the same pan, place the buns cut side down, working in batches if necessary, until lightly toasted, 1 to 2 minutes. Transfer to serving plates.

**4.** Drop a hot dog into each bun and top each with 2 wedges of tomato, 1 cucumber wedge, a few peppers, a little relish, a little onion, some mustard, and shake or two of celery seed.

Feeds 6. *Nutrition per serving: 298 calories, 27 g protein, 37 g carbohydrates (5 g fiber), 6 g fat*

► **A MAN, A PANTRY, A PLAN: SMOKED PAPRIKA**

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Whenever you need a little smokiness, this ground spice is there for you. Shake it into chili, mayo for sandwiches, or avocado toast.



# Four-Chile Pork Chops with Grilled Pineapple

Think of this as what happens when the pork chops and applesauce of your youth grows up, graduates college, and starts pursuing its ambitions. The chops take on a fiery persona. The pineapple retains the same refreshing personality, but with a bit more edge. And the mint adds just the right amount of sophistication.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 tsp ground chili powder
- 1 tsp ground chipotle powder
- 1 tsp ground ancho chili powder
- ¼ tsp ground cayenne
- 2 (8 to 12 oz) bone-in pork chops
- 4 pineapple rings (about ½" thick)
- fresh mint, for serving

1. Preheat your oven to 350°F. In a small bowl, combine the spices with ½ tsp salt.
2. Pat the pork dry with paper towels. Then massage the spice mix into both sides of the pork. Transfer the pork to an oven-safe grill pan and place the pan in the oven. Cook until a meat thermometer inserted into the thickest part of each chop registers 145°F, about 15 minutes. Wearing oven mitts, carefully remove the pan from the oven. Transfer the pork to a cutting board to rest.
3. Place the grill pan over medium-high heat. Add the pineapple rings and sear on each side till marks appear, 1 to 2 minutes a side.
4. Serve the pork chops with the pineapple. Top everything with mint and sea salt.

Feeds 2. *Nutrition per serving: 424 calories, 64 g protein, 17 g carbohydrates (2 g fiber), 11 g fat*

# Shrimp Paella

This Spanish rice dish is typically cooked in a pan about the size and shape of a hubcap. This more manageable version sticks with nonstick. Props if you want to adapt the recipe for a legitimate paella pan, but please do not swap in an actual hubcap.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 2 tsp olive oil
- ½ lb peeled and deveined shrimp, shells reserved
- 2 cups low-sodium seafood or chicken stock
  - pinch saffron
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ cup diced onion
- ¼ cup diced Spanish chorizo
- ½ medium tomato, diced
- ⅓ cup arborio rice
- ¼ cup frozen peas
- ½ tsp smoked paprika

1. In a large nonstick pan over medium-high, heat 1 tsp olive oil. Add the shrimp shells and cook until pink, 3 to 5 minutes. Adjust the heat to medium-low and add the stock and saffron. Simmer until the stock is golden, about 10 minutes. Strain and reserve.
2. In the same pan over medium heat, add the remaining 1 tsp olive oil, garlic, and onion. Cook until aromatic, about 1 minute. Add the shrimp and cook until pink, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the chorizo, tomato, rice, peas, paprika, and a pinch each of salt and pepper. Mix well, add ¾ cup of the reserved stock, and cover the pan with a lid. Cook until the rice is tender, 15 to 20 minutes, adding more stock, ¼ cup at



a time, if the pan becomes too dry. Remove the lid and cook until the rice on the bottom crisps slightly, 5 more minutes. Serve in the pan. Feeds 2. *Nutrition per serving: 423 calories, 29 g protein, 43 g carbohydrates (3 g fiber), 14 g fat*

▶ **WHY'S THAT?**

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Shrimp shells contain boatloads of robust flavor, so don't chuck them in the trash. They'll intensify the shrimp flavor in this dish by 42.76 percent. That's science!

# Catfish Almondine

Trout, sole, haddock, bass—use whatever kind of white, flaky fish you prefer. Once you cover the fillet in browned butter and toasted almonds, it could be a used running shoe insole and the thing would taste amazing.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 2 Tbsp flour
- 2 (3 to 4 oz each) catfish fillets
- 2 Tbsp butter
- ¼ cup sliced almonds
- 2 Tbsp chopped parsley
- ¼ lemon, cut into wedges

1. Spread the flour onto a large plate. Add a big pinch of salt and pepper and mix well. Add the catfish and turn to coat.
  2. In a pan over medium-high heat, melt the butter. Add the fish and brown both sides, 2 to 3 minutes a side. Place on plates.
  3. Add the almonds to the pan and cook, stirring constantly, until the almonds and butter are browned. Divide this mixture over the fillets. Sprinkle the fish with parsley and serve with lemon wedges.
- Feeds 2. *Nutrition per serving: 387 calories, 28 g protein, 9 g carbohydrates (2 g fiber), 27 g fat*



# Beef Tacos with Charred Scallions and Salsa Verde

Those mass-market taco seasoning packets lean hard on the salt and autolyzed yeast extract (yum!). Cut the crap and try this cleaner-tasting version instead. Punched up with the one-two bite of scallions and radishes, and tempered with the tang of salsa verde, this isn't any taco dinner you'd build from a box.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 8 scallions, root ends trimmed
- 8 (6") corn tortillas
- 1 tsp canola oil
- 1 lb lean beef (92/8 works best)
- 1 Tbsp ground chili powder
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- ½ tsp dried oregano
- pinch cinnamon
- 2 small radishes, thinly sliced
- 2 Tbsp fresh cilantro
- salsa verde, for serving

1. Preheat your oven to 200°F. In a large dry cast-iron pan over medium heat, add the scallions. Cook until softened and charred, 5 to 7 minutes. Transfer to a plate and place in the oven.
2. In the same pan, heat the tortillas. Working 2 or 3 tortillas at a time, cook each until pliable, 15 to 30 seconds on each side. Wrap the warmed tortillas in aluminum foil, and stick them in the oven, too.

**3.** In the same pan, heat the oil. Add the beef and cook, stirring frequently, until well browned and cooked through, 5 to 7 minutes. Add the chili powder, paprika, cumin, oregano, and cinnamon. Cook, stirring until well incorporated, about 1 minute. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Remove from the heat.

**4.** Remove the scallions and tortillas from the oven. To assemble a taco, add a few spoonfuls of beef, followed by a scallion, a few radish slices, some cilantro, and salsa verde.

*Feeds 4. Nutrition per serving: 305 calories, 27 g protein, 28 g carbohydrates (3 g fiber), 9 g fat*



# Green Tea–Tuna Sushi Handrolls

People think you need all sorts of equipment to roll sushi at home: a rice cooker, a bamboo paddle, sushi rolling mats, an expensive Japanese knife. Not true. If you have a large pan and basic human faculties, you're set. With this approach, you don't even have to roll and slice. Just fill and fold like you would a taco.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 2 Tbsp rice vinegar
- ¼ Tbsp sugar
- 1½ cups sushi rice
- 2 tea bags green tea
- 2 ahi tuna steaks (about ¾ lb)
- 1 Tbsp canola oil
- 5 sheets nori, quartered
- ½ English cucumber, peeled, seeded, and thinly sliced lengthwise
- 1 avocado, thinly sliced
  - sesame seeds, for garnish
  - soy sauce and wasabi, for serving

1. In a small bowl, mix the vinegar and sugar until dissolved. Set aside.
2. In a large pan, add the rice and 2 cups of water. Bring to a boil, then adjust the heat to low and cover. Cook until tender, 15 to 20 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and, using a wooden spoon, gently fold in the vinegar mixture. Continue to gently stir the rice until the steam subsides and the rice is sticky. Transfer to a large bowl and cover with a kitchen towel.
3. Over a large plate, cut open the tea bags. Add 2 big pinches of salt and pepper, mix, and spread into 1 layer. Place the tuna steaks

onto the tea mixture and turn until both sides are well coated. Set aside.

**4.** Wash and dry the large pan. Place the pan over medium-high heat and add the oil. When the oil is hot, add the tuna steaks and cook until medium-rare, about 2 minutes a side. Transfer the tuna to a cutting board and slice into strips about the size of the nori squares.

**5.** To serve, take a nori square and add a spoonful of sticky rice. Top with a tuna slice, cucumber, avocado, and sesame seeds. Serve with soy sauce and wasabi.

Feeds 5. *Nutrition per serving: 365 calories, 21 g protein, 51 g carbohydrates (4 g fiber), 8 g fat*





# Jumbo Lump Crab Scampi with Cherry Tomatoes

Devour a big bowl of shrimp scampi at one of those Italian-American restaurant chains and you'll likely experience postmeal "scampi face," of which the primary symptom involves garlic-infused grease emanating from your pores. This version lightens up on the oil, trades in heartier whole wheat pasta, and gussies itself up with crab, not shrimp. Don't let yourself suffer from scampi face ever again.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 (12 oz) box whole wheat linguine
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 4 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- ½ tsp crushed red-pepper flakes
- ¼ cup white wine
  - zest and juice from ½ lemon
- 8 oz jumbo lump crabmeat
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes
- ¼ cup chopped tarragon, for serving

- 1.** In a large nonstick pan of boiling salted water, add the pasta and cook, stirring occasionally, until al dente, about 1 minute less than the package directions. Carefully drain.
- 2.** Return the pan to medium heat. Add the oil, garlic, and crushed red-pepper flakes. Cook, stirring, until aromatic, about 1 minute. Add the wine, lemon juice, crab, and tomatoes. Cook until the wine has nearly evaporated, 3 to 5 minutes.
- 3.** Dump the drained pasta into the pan. Add the lemon zest and season with salt and pepper. Using tongs, toss everything together until well coated. Serve topped with the tarragon.

Feeds 4. *Nutrition per serving: 458 calories, 25 g protein, 65 g carbohydrates (10 g fiber), 10 g fat*

▶ **WHY'S THAT?**

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Tarragon is an herb that has a faint licorice-like flavor. Here it adds a nice hit of “What’s that?” If that still sounds unenticing to you, fresh basil, chives, or parsley will do just fine, too.

# Chicken Schnitzel with Sauerkraut

Pan-frying trumps deep-frying any day. You don't need as much cooking oil. Your entire house doesn't reek like the back of a Billy's Burger Bin. And you still produce a beautifully crispy, golden-brown end result. This German-inspired meat-and-cabbage combo is the perfect representative of the technique.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

½ cup flour

1 Tbsp ground mustard

2 egg whites

½ cup panko bread crumbs

½ cup canola oil

2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, pounded flat to ¼" thin

2 cups drained sauerkraut

1 bay leaf

2 thyme sprigs

mustard, for serving

**1.** Prepare a breading station like so: On a large plate, mix the flour, ground mustard, and a big pinch each of salt and pepper. Next, in a large shallow bowl, beat the egg whites until frothy. Finally, on a separate large plate, spread out the panko.

**2.** In a large nonstick or cast-iron pan, heat the oil over medium. When the oil is hot, working 1 chicken breast at a time, first coat the chicken in the flour, then the egg whites, and then the panko. Transfer the breaded chicken to the oil and cook until golden brown and crispy, 2 to 4 minutes on each side. Transfer the cooked chicken to a plate lined with paper towels to drain.

**3.** Carefully transfer the hot oil to a large bowl to cool and eventually discard. Wipe out the pan, return it to the heat, and add the sauerkraut, bay leaf, and thyme. Cook till warmed, 1 to 2 minutes. Serve with the schnitzel and mustard. And beer.

Feeds 2. *Nutrition per serving: 494 calories, 32 g protein, 19 g carbohydrates (4 g fiber), 32 g fat*

▶ **HOLY \$@%! KITCHEN TRICK: THE PAN-BASED STRESS FIGHTER!**

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You could use a meat mallet to pound schnitzel meat flat. Or you could use something you already own. On a cutting board, roll out a sheet of plastic wrap or wax paper. Put the meat on top and cover with another sheet. Then, using a large pan, go buck wild on the meat, bashing the thing like it's Joe Pesci in that scene from *Casino*. Thin meat cooks faster than thick meat, *capisce?*

# Pork Lo Mein with Loads of Vegetables

Chinese restaurants usually go heavy on the noodles and oil and light on the produce. Invert the proportions and you subvert the gut bomb. Like almost anything that comes from a paperboard takeout container, this stuff tastes great straight out of the fridge. Oh, and grab the largest pan you have—the bigger, the better for accommodating all the vegetables.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 (10 oz) package lo mein
- 3 Tbsp reduced sodium soy sauce
- 1 Tbsp oyster sauce
- 1 Tbsp honey
- 1 lb boneless pork chops, cut into 2" × ½" pieces
- 1 Tbsp canola oil
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 scallions, thinly sliced, white and green parts separated
- 1 Tbsp minced ginger
- 2 cups shiitake mushrooms, stems removed, caps thinly sliced
- 1 cup snow peas, thinly sliced lengthwise
- 1 cup thinly sliced savoy or Chinese cabbage
- 1 red bell pepper, seeded, thinly sliced
- 1 cup thinly sliced carrots

1. In a large nonstick pan filled with water, boil the lo mein according to package directions. Drain and set aside.
2. In a small bowl, mix the soy sauce, oyster sauce, and honey until the honey is dissolved. Set aside.
3. Lightly season the pork pieces with salt and pepper. Set aside.

4. Wash and dry the pan and then return it to medium-high heat. Add the oil, garlic, scallion whites, and ginger. Cook, stirring, until aromatic, 1 to 2 minutes. Add the pork and cook, stirring occasionally, until browned and cooked through, 5 to 7 minutes.

5. Add the mushrooms, snow peas, cabbage, bell pepper, and carrots. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the mushrooms are browned, about 5 minutes.

6. Add the lo mein and the sauce and, using tongs, toss everything together until well coated in sauce. Serve topped with the scallion greens.

Feeds 6. *Nutrition per serving: 353 calories, 25 g protein, 45 g carbohydrates (4 g fiber), 8 g fat*

► **A MAN, A PANTRY, A PLAN: OYSTER SAUCE**

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Yes, they actually do make the sauce using oysters (extracts, usually). But the flavor isn't as oceanlike as you might expect. Think of it as less-salty-but-still-salty soy sauce that has a tinge of sweet and a whole lot more savory. You'll learn to love it stirred into stir-fry or sautéed greens. It'll even work as a steak sauce.

# Tuna Burgers with Avocado, Snow Peas, and Wasabi Mayo

Few proteins triumph over beef when it comes to the foundation of a balanced burger, but fresh tuna enters the ring as a worthy contender. Like beef, tuna is substantive and satisfying. It can take higher heat and cooks to a juicy medium-rare. Plus, it's formidable enough in flavor to match most burger toppings.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

1 lb fresh sashimi-grade raw tuna steak, finely chopped

½ cup panko bread crumbs

1 egg

2 Tbsp minced chives

1 tsp reduced-sodium soy sauce

1 tsp fish sauce

¼ cup mayonnaise

2 tsp wasabi powder

1 Tbsp canola oil

4 sesame seeded hamburger buns

1 cup snow peas, thinly sliced lengthwise

1 avocado, thinly sliced

**1.** In a large bowl, add the tuna, panko, egg, chives, soy sauce, and fish sauce. Using your hands, gently mix the ingredients well, and then shape 4 equal-size patties about 1" thick. Place the patties on a plate and refrigerate for 10 minutes to firm.

**2.** In a small bowl, combine the mayo and wasabi powder. Set aside.

**3.** In a large nonstick pan over medium-high heat, add the oil. When the oil shimmers, add the tuna patties. Cook until the undersides of

the patties are golden brown, 2 to 3 minutes. Flip and repeat. (Note, the inside of the patties will be medium-rare. That's okay.)

**4.** To assemble a burger, place a tuna patty on the bottom half of a bun. Top with a spoonful of wasabi mayo, a small handful of snow peas, and a few slices of avocado. Close the bun. Repeat with the remaining ingredients.

*Feeds 4. Nutrition per serving: 486 calories, 35 g protein, 31 g carbohydrates (4 g fiber), 24 g fat*





# Spicy Bison Bacon Burgers

Burger bliss is built upon five cornerstones: savory, spicy, sweet, creamy, and bacony. Missing just one tenant can make a burger fall flat. Here, lean bison brings the meatiness, a simple secret sauce delivers sweet heat, cheddar and avocado ratchet up the richness, and bacon—praise be—lends all its smoky, porky deliciousness.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- ¼ cup ketchup
- 2 Tbsp hot sauce (such as Tabasco)
- 1 lb ground bison, shaped into 4 patties
- 4 slices aged cheddar
- 4 hamburger buns
- 4 slices bacon, cooked and halved
- 1 avocado, sliced
- ¼ cup thinly sliced red onion
- 1 cup arugula

1. Preheat your grill pan to medium-high. In a small bowl mix the ketchup and hot sauce. Set aside.
2. Season the bison patties on both sides with salt and pepper. Put the patties on the grill pan and sear, about 3 minutes on each side for medium-rare. During the last minute of cooking, top each patty with a slice of cheese. Remove the burgers from the heat.
3. To assemble a burger, spoon about a tablespoon of ketchup atop the bottom bun. Top with the burger, 2 bacon halves, 3 or 4 slices of avocado, some onion, and some arugula. Repeat with the remaining ingredients. Feeds 4. *Nutrition per burger: 623 calories, 42 g protein, 30 g carbohydrates (3 g fiber), 37 g fat*

# Chicken Thighs with Burnt Mandarin Oranges and Green Olives

Before you discount these flavors as “weird” and go flipping off to another page, hold up. Dark-meat chicken thighs possess a richness that’s only intensified by a counterpunch of salty green olives, briny capers, bracing red onions, and lusciously sweet torched citrus. It’s a good kind of weird—like Frank Zappa, David Lynch, or *MAD* magazine.

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## WHAT YOU’LL NEED:

½ cup large pimento-stuffed green olives, sliced into circles

1 Tbsp capers, chopped

½ small red onion, minced

1 Tbsp olive oil, plus 1 tsp

1 lb bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs

2 mandarin oranges, sliced into circles

2 Tbsp chopped parsley leaves

1. In a small bowl, mix the olives, capers, red onion, and 1 Tbsp olive oil. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Set aside.
2. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Season the chicken on both sides with salt and pepper. In a large cast-iron pan over medium heat, add the 1 tsp olive oil. When the oil shimmers, add the chicken, skin side down. Cook until the skin crisps, giving a quarter turn occasionally to promote even browning, 8 to 10 minutes. Flip the chicken. Tuck the mandarin orange slices beneath the chicken and place the pan in the oven.
3. Roast until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part of each thigh registers 165°F. Using oven mitts, carefully remove the pan from the oven. Transfer the oranges to 2 plates and place 2

pieces of chicken atop the oranges, followed by the olive mixture and parsley.

*Feeds 2. Nutrition per serving: 420 calories, 34 g protein, 15 g carbohydrates (2 g fiber), 24 g fat*

# Grilled Lamb and Vegetable Hummus Wraps

You could call this a gyro, sure. It uses some of the same seasonings. It does not, however, involve one of those tornado-shaped spinning meat apparatuses. Unless you already happen to own one of those. And in that case, you're way too ahead of the game to need this recipe.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

1¼ lb lamb shoulder, trimmed of bone and fat, cut into thin strips

1 Tbsp olive oil, plus more for brushing

juice from ½ lemon, plus ½ lemon, cut into 4 wedges

½ tsp ground coriander

½ tsp ground cumin

½ tsp ground turmeric

pinch cinnamon

4 whole wheat Greek pitas

1 red bell pepper, cut into 1" pieces

¼ large onion, cut into 1" pieces

¼ cup prepared hummus

4 sprigs fresh oregano

**1.** In a medium bowl, combine the lamb, 1 Tbsp olive oil, juice from ½ lemon, coriander, cumin, turmeric, cinnamon, and a big pinch each of salt and pepper. Set aside.

**2.** Brush the pitas on both sides with olive oil. In a dry cast-iron pan or cast-iron grill pan over medium heat, add the pitas, working one at a time, and cook till warmed and pliable, about 1 minute a side. Wrap the cooked pitas in foil. Set aside.

3. In the same pan, add the bell pepper, onion, and lamb. Cook, turning occasionally, till the lamb is well browned, 3 to 5 minutes.
  4. Slather each pita with 1 Tbsp hummus and top with  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the lamb mixture and the leaves of 1 oregano sprig. Repeat with the remaining ingredients. Serve with lemon wedges.
- Feeds 4. *Nutrition per serving: 267 calories, 12 g protein, 32 g carbohydrates (5 g fiber), 10 g fat*



# Pork Chop Saltimbocca with Broccoli Rabe

You'll see the veal version of this Italian dish on menus more often than this pork-on-pork iteration. But some supermarkets are still fussy about stocking veal. If you've never had saltimbocca, period, get on that. Switch between bites of the meat and the lemony bitter greens for the full experience.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

2 boneless pork chops

2 large fresh sage leaves

2 slices prosciutto

2 Tbsp panko bread crumbs

1 Tbsp olive oil

1 bunch broccoli rabe

juice of ½ lemon

1. Season both sides of the pork chops with salt and pepper. Place a sage leaf atop each chop. Then wrap a slice of prosciutto around each chop, securing the sage leaves. Set aside.
2. Preheat your oven to 375°F. In a dry large nonstick oven-safe pan over medium heat, add the crumbs and a pinch each of salt and pepper. Toast, stirring frequently, until golden brown, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer to a bowl.
3. In the same pan over medium, heat the oil. When the oil shimmers, add the prosciutto-wrapped pork. Cook until the prosciutto crisps, 3 to 5 minutes a side. Transfer the entire pan to the oven and roast until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the center of each chop registers 145°F. Wearing oven mitts, carefully remove the pan from the oven. Transfer the saltimbocca to 2 serving plates.
4. In the same pan, add the broccoli rabe and cook until tender, about 5 minutes. Add the lemon juice and cook until evaporated, about 1



minute. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Transfer the broccoli rabe to the plates with the pork. Top the broccoli rabe with the toasted bread crumbs.

*Feeds 2. Nutrition per serving: 408 calories, 54 g protein, 15 g carbohydrates (0 g fiber), 15 g fiber*



# Chicken Pan Pie

Pot pie, despite its name, does not require a pot. This recipe might impress a few people for that reason alone, but you can win over the rest of the skeptics by telling them the secret ingredient: beer.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

2 tsp canola oil

2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into bite-size pieces

2 leeks, dark green parts removed, white and light green parts chopped, rinsed well

3 carrots, chopped

1 cup frozen peas

1 cup beer (lagers, pale ales, and stouts all work well)

1 cup low-sodium chicken stock

3 Tbsp flour

leaves from 2 sprigs fresh rosemary, finely chopped

1 frozen puff pastry sheet, thawed

**1.** In a large cast-iron pan over medium-high, heat 1 tsp oil. Add the chicken and cook, stirring frequently, till browned, 8 to 10 minutes. Transfer the chicken to a plate lined with paper towels.

**2.** Preheat your oven to 350°F. In the same pan, heat the remaining 1 tsp oil. Add the leeks, carrots, and peas. Cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 3 minutes. Add the beer and stock. Bring the mixture to a boil and then reduce the heat to medium-low. Stir in the flour until well incorporated. Add the rosemary and chicken and cook until thickened, about 5 minutes.

**3.** Lay the puff pastry sheet directly over the mixture in the pan. (Depending on the size of your pan, you may need to cut the extra puff pastry and fill in any spaces.) Place the entire pan in the oven and cook according to the puff pastry package's instructions. Using

oven mitts, remove from the oven and allow to cool at least 5 minutes before serving.

Feeds 6. *Nutrition per serving: 372 calories, 15 g protein, 33 g carbohydrates (3 g fiber), 19 g fat*

▶ **HOLY \$@%! KITCHEN TRICK: THE CRUST SHAPE SHIFTER!**

If you cut the puff pastry sheet to fit the pan, you'll notice that, geez, you seem to have some leftover puff pastry. Don't waste the potential for more fluffy, flaky dough to eat. Cut the leftover dough into leaf shapes, or stars, or a portrait of Albert Einstein, because the world is your oyster, dammit. Lay the cutouts on top of the sheet and bake. Einstein never tasted so good!



# Seared Salmon with Cucumber Salad

Have you ever had one of those weekends that sends a junk-food tornado through your well-intentioned eating plan? For those weekends, there's this fresh fish dish that'll help you pick up the postdisaster pieces. It sure tastes better than a bs "detoxifying" wheatgrass smoothie.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

½ English cucumber, very thinly sliced

2 scallions, thinly sliced, 1 Tbsp green parts reserved for garnish

1 Tbsp rice vinegar

¼ tsp Japanese 7-spice (Ichimi Togarashi)

pinch sugar

1 Tbsp canola oil

2 (3 to 4 oz each) skin-on salmon fillets

**1.** In a medium bowl, combine the cukes, scallions, vinegar, 7-spice, sugar, and salt, to taste. Mix well and place in the fridge.

**2.** In a large cast-iron pan over medium-high, heat the oil. Pat the salmon dry with paper towels and season both sides with salt. When the oil shimmers, add the salmon skin side down to the pan. Cook until the skin crisps, about 3 minutes. Flip and cook until the flesh is pink throughout, about 2 minutes.

**3.** Spoon the cucumber salad onto 2 plates, followed by a salmon fillet each, presented skin side up. Top with the scallion greens. Serve (and eat the skin!).

Feeds 2. *Nutrition per serving: 312 calories, 24 g protein, 3 g carbohydrates (1 g fiber), 22 g fat*

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▶ **A MAN, A PANTRY, A PLAN: JAPANESE 7-SPICE**

Not to be confused with Chinese 5-spice, Japanese 7-spice is far more fiery. You'll also detect a little orange peel, some sesame seeds, and dried seaweed. Try it on scrambled eggs, chicken soup, or cheese pizza.

# Pulled Pork

Crock-pots hog counter space and clog cabinets. If you own a pan with a lid and have a functioning oven, you basically own a crock-pot. And if you basically own a crock-pot, you have no reason to go without this pulled pork in your life right now. Listen closely when you remove the finished product from the oven. If it's dead quiet, you may hear angels sing.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 2 Tbsp kosher salt
- 2 Tbsp paprika
- 1 Tbsp freshly ground black pepper
- ½ Tbsp ground cumin
- ½ tsp ground mustard seed
- ½ tsp onion powder
- 1 (4 lb) pork butt, cut into fist-size pieces
- 1 cup apple juice

1. In a large bowl, combine the sugar and all the spices. Add the pork and mix well, massaging the rub into the meat. Cover and place in the fridge for at least 1 hour; ideally 8.
2. Preheat your oven to 300°F. In a large cast-iron pan, add the apple juice and the pork. Cover loosely with foil and place in the oven. Roast until the meat is fork-tender, 3 to 4 hours.
3. Using oven mitts, carefully remove the pan. Using 2 forks, pull the meat apart, discarding any large pieces of fat. Toss the meat in the juices and serve.

Feeds 6. *Nutrition per serving: 354 calories, 43 g protein, 13 g carbohydrates (1 g fiber), 14 g fat*





# Shrimp Gumbo

A gumbo is only as good as the roux you build it upon. To make a roux you warm butter and whisk in flour. Then you wait, and whisk, and wait, and whisk until the color is that of dark chocolate and your feet hurt from standing by the stove. Pull it any earlier and the gumbo suffers. Consider it a lesson in patience in which you will be dearly rewarded with heaps of soul-satisfying comfort food.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 4 Tbsp butter
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 1 Tbsp canola oil
- ½ cup diced Andouille sausage
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 green bell pepper, seeded and diced
- 2 celery ribs, diced
- 1 jalapeño, minced with seeds
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 Tbsp tomato paste
- 2 cups low-sodium seafood or chicken stock
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 tsp Cajun seasoning
- ½ lb shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 cup long-grain rice, cooked
- 2 scallions, thinly sliced

**1.** In a small pan over medium heat, melt the butter. Whisk in the flour, 1 Tbsp at a time, and then lower the heat to medium-low. Whisk

frequently until the mixture is dark brown, about 30 minutes. Turn the heat to low to reserve.

**2.** In a large nonstick pan over medium, heat the oil. Add the sausage and cook until aromatic, about 1 minute. Add the onion, bell pepper, celery, jalapeño, garlic, and tomato paste. Cook, stirring frequently, until the vegetables are tender, about 7 minutes.

**3.** Slowly stir in the flour mixture. Add the stock and stir out any clumps that may form. Add the bay leaf, Cajun seasoning, and a pinch each of salt and pepper. Adjust the heat to medium-low and simmer until the flavors meld, about 30 minutes.

**4.** Add the shrimp and cook until pink, 3 to 5 minutes. Season to taste. Stir in the rice and serve topped with scallions.

*Feeds 4. Nutrition per serving: 489 calories, 20 g protein, 56 g carbohydrates (3 g fiber), 21 g fat*

# Falafel with Fixins

It's difficult trying to convince someone that fried chickpea balls are something delicious and deserving of their stomach space. The best way is to make a diy batch (all you need is a blender and a few ingredients), sizzle them fresh, and then serve them to the pessimist. The still-warm falafel, along with a banquet of fresh toppings, should be enough to thaw their cold, hardened, anti-chickpea heart.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 2** (15 oz) cans chickpeas, drained
- ½ medium red onion, chopped
- 2** garlic cloves
  - leaves from 3 parsley stems
- ½ tsp ground cumin
  - juice from ½ lemon, plus ½ lemon cut into wedges
- ½ cup bread crumbs
  - pinch baking powder
- 1** Tbsp canola oil
- 6** whole wheat pocket pitas, halved
- ½ English cucumber, peeled, seeds removed, diced
- 2** tomatoes, diced
- 2** cups thinly shredded romaine
  - hummus, for serving

**1.** In a blender or food processor, add the chickpeas, onion, garlic, parsley, cumin, lemon juice, and a big pinch each of salt and pepper. Pulse until chunky. Gradually add the bread crumbs and baking powder till firm. (If the mixture is too thick to process, add a little water—1 Tbsp at a time—but not so much so that it looks like hummus.)

**2.** Using your hands, form the chickpea mixture into 15 to 18 golf-ball-size balls. In a large nonstick pan over medium, heat the canola oil. When the oil shimmers, add the falafel balls and smush lightly so they become disc-shaped. Fry till crisp, about 3 minutes a side. Transfer to a plate lined with paper towels to drain.

**3.** Serve the falafel tucked into pitas with the cukes, tomatoes, lettuce, and hummus. Serve with lemon wedges.

Feeds 6. *Nutrition per serving: 372 calories, 16 g protein, 60 g carbohydrates (13 g fiber), 9 g fat*

# Salmon Curry with Garlic Naan

Curry cravings can strike swiftly and viciously. A prepared home cook will always have a frozen salmon fillet, a few tomatoes, and the necessary pantry staples as a defense. With these weapons in your culinary arsenal, you can fend off the attack in a mere half hour. Then grant yourself some R&R.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 4 pieces naan
- 1 tsp canola oil, plus more for brushing
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ medium onion, chopped
- 2 tsp curry powder
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- 4 medium tomatoes, chopped
- ½ serrano or jalapeño pepper, thinly sliced
- 1 lb skinless salmon fillet, cut into bite-size pieces
- 2 tsp minced cilantro

1. Preheat your oven to 200°F. Brush both sides of each naan with canola oil. In a dry large nonstick pan over medium, heat the naan until pliable, about 2 minutes a side. Scatter each piece of naan with a little garlic, then wrap them all in foil and place in the oven.
2. In the same pan over medium heat, add the 1 tsp oil and the onion. Cook, stirring occasionally, until slightly browned, 5 to 7 minutes. Add the curry powder and cumin and stir well. Add the tomatoes and hot pepper and cook, stirring occasionally, till thickened, about 15 minutes. Add the salmon and cook, stirring occasionally, until cooked through and flaky, 3 to 5 minutes.

**3.** Remove the naan from the oven, sprinkle with cilantro, and serve with the curry.

Feeds 4. *Nutrition per serving: 421 calories, 31 g protein, 43 g carbohydrates (6 g fiber), 14 g fat*

# Bison and Farro Chili

Why bison? Well, it's often leaner than beef, which means it won't create an oil slick in your chili bowl. Why farro? It's a hearty grain that adds bulk, along with a slightly chewy texture and nutty flavor. Why beans? Look, already, leave them out if you're a purist. What's with all the questions?

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 Tbsp canola oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 2 jalapeños, chopped with seeds
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1½ tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp ground chili powder
- ½ tsp Mexican oregano
- ⅓ cup farro
- 1 lb ground bison
- 1 (15 oz) can whole tomatoes in puree, crushed by hand, with juice
- 1 (15 oz) can kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- ½ cup low-sodium chicken stock
- sour cream, for serving

- 1.** In a large cast-iron pan over medium, heat the canola oil. Add the onion, bell pepper, jalapeño, and garlic. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion is translucent, 8 to 10 minutes.
- 2.** Add the cumin, chili powder, and oregano. Cook until aromatic, about 1 minute. Add the farro and the bison. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the bison is no longer pink, 3 to 5 minutes.



**3.** Add the tomatoes, beans, stock, and a big pinch each of salt and pepper. Adjust the heat to medium-low, cover with a lid, and cook until the farro is tender, 25 to 30 minutes. Remove from the heat and season with additional salt, if needed. Serve with sour cream.

Feeds 6. *Nutrition (with 1 Tbsp sour cream per serving): 370 calories, 22 g protein, 29 g carbohydrates (7 g fiber), 18 g fat*



# Littleneck Clams with Garlic Bread

Summer has many tastes—fresh watermelon, corn on the cob, water straight from the hose (come on, you know you do it). But few surpass steamed clams plucked directly out of their shells. The best part of this feast is that you can conjure up the taste of summer all year round. Can't say that about the hose water.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 demi baguette, sliced lengthwise
- 1 tsp olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/3 cup white wine
- 1 lemon, quartered
- 2 scallions, thinly sliced
- 1 Tbsp chopped parsley, plus 4 full stems
- 50 littleneck clams, rinsed and scrubbed well

**1.** Preheat the oven to 200°F. Brush the cut halves of the bread with olive oil. In a large dry cast-iron pan over medium-high heat, place the bread cut side down in the pan. Cook till slightly charred in places, 3 to 5 minutes. Remove from the pan, top with the garlic, wrap in foil, and place in the oven to keep warm.

**2.** In the same pan, adjust the heat to medium. Add the wine, lemon, scallions, parsley stems, and clams. Cover the pan with a lid and steam until the clams open, 10 minutes. Serve immediately with the garlic bread.

*Feeds 2. Nutrition per serving: 502 calories, 58 g protein, 43 g carbohydrates (4 g fiber), 6 g fat*

# Cabbage Noodles

This one's for all you polish grandmothers who own a copy of this book. All one of you. Here's to you, Grammie!

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 lb farfalle (bowtie pasta)
- 1 tsp canola oil
- 2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- ½ onion, thinly sliced
- ½ head cabbage, roughly chopped
- 1 Tbsp butter

1. In a large pan of boiling salted water, add the farfalle and cook, stirring occasionally, 1 minute less than package instructions. Drain and reserve.
2. In the same pan over medium-low heat, add the oil, garlic, onion, and cabbage. Cook, stirring occasionally, till the cabbage is wilted, 20 to 25 minutes.
3. Add the pasta and butter to the pan. Stir until the butter is melted. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Feeds 4. *Nutrition per serving: 495 calories, 17 g protein, 94 g carbohydrates (7 g fiber), 6 g fat*





# Italian Wedding Soup

No need to buy monogrammed bath towels. The only things getting married in this recipe are the savory flavors of homemade turkey meatballs, tiny star-shaped pasta, and chicken stock.

Congratulations!

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

½ lb ground turkey

¼ cup panko bread crumbs

leaves from 2 fresh parsley stems, minced

1 garlic clove, minced

1 egg yolk

2 tsp olive oil

½ medium onion, finely chopped

1 qt low-sodium chicken stock

¼ cup pastina pasta

4 cups fresh spinach

- 1.** In a large bowl, add the turkey, panko, parsley, garlic, egg yolk, and a big pinch each of salt and pepper. Using your hands, mix well and form into 25 to 30 meatballs about the circumference of a quarter. Place them on a plate and refrigerate for 30 minutes to firm.
- 2.** In a large cast-iron pan, heat 1 tsp of the oil over medium. Add the meatballs and sear on all sides, 8 to 10 minutes total. Transfer the cooked meatballs to a plate lined with paper towels to drain.
- 3.** Carefully wipe the cast-iron pan clean and return it to medium-low. Add the rest of the oil and onion and cook, stirring frequently, until translucent, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the stock and pastina. Bring to a boil over high heat and then adjust the heat to medium so the liquid reaches a strong simmer. Add the meatballs and spinach. Cook until

the pastina is tender, about 5 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat, season the soup with salt and pepper, and serve.

Feeds 4. *Nutrition per serving: 262 calories, 24 g protein, 26 g carbohydrates (2 g fiber), 7 g fat*





# Cast-Iron Party Pizza!

Stop calling in delivery to feed your friends. What is this, a U-15 soccer league? You don't need a pizza stone or a pizza peel to make incredible slices at home. Just flop rolled-out premade pizza dough onto a screaming-hot preheated cast-iron pan, razzle-dazzle on the toppings, and then slide that bad boy in the oven. Seven minutes later you have fluffy, flaky, cheesy, saucy goodness. This is the master recipe. Variations follow.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

flour, for working with the dough

1 lb 12 oz premade pizza dough, brought to room temperature, cut into fourths

1 Tbsp olive oil

1 cup tomato sauce

1 (8 oz) ball fresh mozzarella, torn into bite-size pieces

leaves from 4 stems fresh basil, torn

1. On a floured surface, stretch the portions of dough until they're thin, yet still large enough to fit inside the bottom of the pan. Cover the dough with clean towels.
2. Place a cast-iron pan in the oven and preheat to 500°F. When the pan is very hot (after about 15 minutes), use oven mitts to carefully remove the pan from the oven and place it on a heat-resistant surface. Add the olive oil, swirl to coat the surface, and then add 1 pizza crust. Top with a spoonful or two of tomato sauce and a few pieces of mozzarella. Place the pan back in the oven on the lowest rack and bake until the dough is puffy and golden brown and the cheese is melted, 5 to 7 minutes (but keep an eye on it).
3. Using oven mitts, remove the pan and place it on a heat-resistant surface. Using a fish spatula, transfer the pizza to a cutting board, top with basil, and slice. Repeat with the remaining ingredients. Makes 4

pizzas. *Nutrition per pizza: 733 calories, 25 g protein, 87 g carbohydrates (4 g fiber), 28 g fat*

▶ **LEFTOVER LAW**

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The best way to reheat pizza? Pop a slice in the cast-iron pan over medium. Cover with a lid. Cook until the cheese is warmed. It'll crisp up on the bottom, too.

## Variation #1: (Actually Delicious) Vegetable Pizza

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### WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 2 cups spinach, wilted in a little oil in a pan
- 1 (8 oz) can quartered artichokes, drained
- 1 large roasted red pepper, thinly sliced

Follow all the steps on the previous page, but apply these toppings in addition to the sauce and mozzarella. (Skip the basil.)

Makes 4 pizzas. *Nutrition per serving: 775 calories, 27 g protein, 96 g carbohydrates (6 g fiber), 28 g fat*

## Variation #2: Quinny's Clam Pizza

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### WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 (6 oz) can chopped clams, rinsed and drained
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 cup pecorino romano, freshly grated
- 1 tsp dried oregano

Follow all the steps on the previous page, but add these toppings instead of the sauce and mozzarella. Makes 4 pizzas. *Nutrition per serving: 705 calories, 21 g protein, 85 g carbohydrates (4 g fiber), 26 g fat*

# Ground Chicken Larb Cabbage Cups

Larb. Not lard. In fact, this mound of lean meat seasoned with fun and exciting stir-ins is a pretty good fat-battling meal. Fight lard with larb!

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 2 Tbsp uncooked jasmine rice
- 1 Tbsp canola oil
- 1 lb ground chicken
- 1 shallot, minced
- 2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- 2 Thai chiles or ½ jalapeño, thinly sliced
- 1 Tbsp sugar
- 2 Tbsp fish sauce
- juice from 1 lime
- 8 cabbage leaves
- leaves from 12 fresh cilantro stems (about 1 cup)
- leaves from 3 fresh mint stems (about ½ cup)
- Sriracha, to taste

- 1.** In a large dry nonstick pan over medium heat, add the rice. Heat, shaking the pan occasionally, until the rice smells like popcorn and turns golden, about 2 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat, allow the rice to cool, and then transfer it to a clean coffee grinder to pulverize into a powder. Set aside.
- 2.** In the same pan over medium, heat the oil. Add the chicken and cook, stirring and chopping to break it into small crumbles, until lightly browned, 8 to 10 minutes.
- 3.** Add the shallot, garlic, chiles, sugar, and fish sauce. Stir until well coated. Add the lime juice and reserved rice powder and stir until well

coated. Serve immediately. Spoon the chicken mixture onto the cabbage leaves and top with cilantro, mint, and sriracha.

Feeds 4. *Nutrition per serving: 272 calories, 22 g protein, 18 g carbohydrates (3 g fiber), 13 g fat*



# Red and Green Chicken Enchiladas

Tacos are to enchiladas what Will Smith is to DJ Jazzy Jeff. The former are overexposed while the latter are underappreciated. Give enchiladas the attention and praise they deserve. Bonus: this meal is the only one in this entire book that you can sort of make look like the Mexican flag.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 Tbsp canola oil
- 8 (6") flour tortillas
- 2 cups shredded Oaxacan, Chihuahua, or mozzarella cheese
- 2 cups shredded rotisserie chicken meat
- 1 (10 oz) can red enchilada sauce
- 1 (10 oz) can green enchilada sauce
- ½ cup crumbled Cotija cheese
- 2 Tbsp sour cream
- juice from ¼ lime
- leaves from 8 cilantro stems

1. Preheat your oven to 375°F. In a large cast-iron pan over medium-high, heat the oil. Working one at a time, cook the tortillas until puffed and pliable, about 1 minute per side. Transfer to a plate lined with paper towels.
2. Remove the cast-iron pan from the heat and allow to cool slightly. Line the center of a tortilla with a little cheese and a few pieces of chicken. Roll tightly and place seam side down onto the pan. Repeat with the remaining tortillas so that everything fits snugly in the pan. Pour the red enchilada sauce over one half of the pan. Pour the green enchilada sauce over the other. Scatter the Cotija over the center. Transfer the pan to the oven and bake until the cheese is slightly melted and beginning to brown, 15 to 20 minutes.



3. In a small bowl, mix together the sour and the lime juice. Set aside.
4. Using oven mitts, carefully remove the pan from the oven. Drizzle the sour cream sauce over the enchiladas, top with cilantro, and serve.

Feeds 4. *Nutrition per serving: 672 calories, 44 g protein, 39 g carbohydrates (2 g fiber), 37 g fat*

# Cold Peanut Noodles with Chicken

To limit peanut butter to toast is to restrict its power. Just try leaving the peanut butter out here and see what happens. To loosely quote the dude, it really ties the meal together.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- ½ cup creamy peanut butter
- 1 Tbsp rice vinegar
- 1 Tbsp soy sauce
- 2 tsp sesame oil
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 Tbsp grated ginger (about 1 thumb-size piece, peeled)
- 16 oz whole wheat spaghetti
- 2 cups sliced shiitake mushrooms
- 1 red bell pepper, seeded and thinly sliced
- 2 scallions, thinly sliced, white and green parts separated
- 1 (2 lb) rotisserie chicken, shredded
- 2 Tbsp sesame seeds

1. In a medium bowl, stir together the peanut butter, rice vinegar, soy sauce, 1 tsp sesame oil, garlic, ginger, and ¼ cup water. Mix well, adding more water, if needed, until saucy. Set aside.
2. In a large pan of boiling salted water, cook the spaghetti according to package instructions. Drain well.
3. In the same pan over medium heat, add the remaining 1 tsp sesame oil. When the oil shimmers, add the mushrooms, bell pepper, and the white part of the scallions. Cook, stirring frequently, until the bell pepper slices are slightly tender, about 5 minutes.
4. In a large bowl, toss the vegetables, pasta, peanut sauce, green scallions, chicken, and sesame seeds. Refrigerate until chilled, about

2 hours. Before serving, drizzle with a little sesame oil and soy sauce to moisten and toss well.

Feeds 6. *Nutrition per serving: 585 calories, 37 g protein, 66 g carbohydrates (12 g fiber), 21 g fat*

# Catfish Burritos with Pickled Red Onions and Chipotle Mayo

A decent burrito isn't hard to find. But you deserve better than decent. You deserve rice that is more than just filler. You deserve flash-fried crispy cornmeal catfish that goes way beyond ground beef. You deserve lip-tingling, creamy, spicy mayo. You deserve full-force burrito awesomeness. (quick shout-out to the legendary Alto Cinco in Syracuse, New York, for the inspiration.)

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

¼ medium red onion, very thinly sliced

½ cup vinegar

1 (8 oz) box yellow rice

4 (10") flour tortillas

¼ cup canola oil

1 lb catfish, cut into bite-size pieces

¼ cup yellow cornmeal

¼ cup mayonnaise

½ tsp chipotle chile powder

¼ small head green cabbage, very thinly sliced

¼ cup finely shredded cheddar

1 small tomato, diced

leaves from 8 cilantro stems, minced

1 lime, quartered

1. In a small bowl, combine the onion and vinegar. Set aside.
2. In a large nonstick pan, cook the rice according to package instructions. Transfer the rice to a bowl and cover to keep warm.

**3.** Wipe the pan clean and set it over medium-high heat. Add the tortillas one at a time and cook until pliable, about 30 seconds a side. Wrap in foil. Set aside.

**4.** Adjust the same pan's heat to medium. Add the canola oil. In a large bowl toss the catfish with the cornmeal and a big pinch each of salt and pepper. Carefully add the catfish to the hot oil and pan-fry, stirring occasionally, until crispy, 8 to 10 minutes. Transfer to a plate lined with paper towels to drain.

**5.** In a small bowl, stir together the mayo and ground chipotle. Set aside.

**6.** To construct a burrito, place a tortilla on a flat surface. Leaving about 2" between the fillings and the edge of the burrito at all times, add some chipotle mayo, rice, the now-pickled red onion, catfish, cabbage, Cheddar, tomato, and cilantro. Fold 2 sides of the tortilla inward so they cover the ends of the fillings. Still holding the tortilla in this position, bring the bottom end of the tortilla up and over the fillings and then roll tightly so the ends are tucked. Wrap in foil or transfer to a plate, seam side down, to eat with a knife and fork. Repeat with the remaining ingredients.

Feeds 4. *Nutrition per serving: 647 calories, 29 g protein, 74 g carbohydrates (4 g fiber), 27 g fat*



# Bell Pepper Beef Stir-Fry

This quintessential bachelor meal is a huge level up from ramen bricks. It features lean sirloin, bushels of vegetables, and a secret sauce. Perfect the date-caliber dish and you may not be a bachelor for long. “oh, this? It’s just something i whipped up . . .”

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## WHAT YOU’LL NEED:

- 1 Tbsp canola oil
- 1 garlic clove, thinly sliced
- ¼ medium red onion, chopped
- 1 bunch asparagus, woody ends removed, chopped
- 2 cups baby corn
- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 1 lb sirloin, cut into bite size pieces
- 2 Tbsp oyster sauce

**1.** In a large nonstick pan, add the oil, garlic, and onion. Turn the heat to medium-high and cook, stirring frequently, until the onion is translucent, about 3 minutes.

**2.** Add the asparagus, corn, and bell pepper. Cook, stirring frequently, until the asparagus is just tender, another 3 minutes.

**3.** Add the beef and cook until browned on all sides, about 3 minutes. Stir in the oyster sauce and serve immediately.

Feeds 2. *Nutrition per serving: 417 calories, 52 g protein, 10 g carbohydrates (2 g fiber), 18 g fat*

# APPETIZERS & SIDES

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Could Batman exist without Robin? Bilbo Baggins without Samwise Gamgee? Mario without Luigi? They'd manage, but their lives would be less rounded and, perhaps, incomplete. Same goes for your meals. Sometimes the main attraction could use a little support. Turn to these sidekicks in your times of need, like when you need to feed a crowd—or when your hungry alter ego emerges.





## THE RECIPES

Pan-Crisped Tortilla Chips

Charred Corn Salsa

Roasted Salsa Verde

Kale-Cranberry Couscous Salad

Creamed Beet Tops

Slow-Simmered Collard Greens

Buffalo Chicken Meatballs with Tangy Blue Cheese Sauce

Rosemary, Parmesan, and Black Olive Focaccia

Green Chile Cornbread

Skillet Popcorn

Charred Honey-Orange-Walnut Brussels Sprouts

Chickpea Salad with Cumin, Golden Raisins, and Mint

Spaghetti Squash with Pesto

Kung Pao Baby Bok Choy

Rosemary Glazed Carrots

Salt and Vinegar Kale Chips

Snap Peas with Peanuts and Chili-Garlic Sauce

Balsamic Mushrooms with Herbs

Eggplant Fries

# Pan-Crisped Tortilla Chips

Why bake yourself what you can already buy in a bag? Well, for one thing, the recipe below is just a starting point. Add ground chili powder and lime juice (or finely grated parmesan and oregano, or . . .) And you've gone mad-scientist on flavor. Ace the basics. Then experiment.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

**10** small (6") yellow corn tortillas

**2** Tbsp canola oil

ground cumin

dried oregano

- 1.** Lightly brush each side of the tortillas with oil and season with a pinch of salt, cumin, and oregano.
- 2.** In a large nonstick pan over medium-low, add the tortillas, working in batches, until the tortillas are crisped, flipping frequently, 4 to 6 minutes total. Transfer to a cutting board to cool. Cut or break the tortillas in sixths.

Feeds 6, as an appetizer. *Nutrition per serving: 108 calories, 2 g protein, 13 g carbohydrates (2 g fiber), 6 g fat*



# Charred Corn Salsa

Pairing homemade chips with store-bought salsa is a little like serving caviar on wonder bread. Step up your salsa game to meet your newly achieved chip standards.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 tsp canola oil
- ¼ cup frozen corn
- 1 poblano pepper, seeded, sliced into strips
- ¼ cup canned black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 Tbsp chopped cilantro
- juice from ½ lime
- 1 Tbsp minced red onion

1. In a large nonstick pan over medium-high, heat the oil.
  2. Add the corn and poblano and cook until slightly charred, 3 to 5 minutes.
  3. In a medium bowl, add the corn, poblano, beans, cilantro, lime juice, and onion. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
- Feeds 4, as an appetizer. *Nutrition per serving: 38 calories, 1 g protein, 6 g carbohydrates (2 g fiber), 1 g fat*

# Roasted Salsa Verde

Think of tomatillos as bright green flavor grenades. When charred on hot cast iron, they take on a tart sharpness with a slightly sweet undercurrent. Beyond chips, this salsa tastes unbelievable on grilled fish and scrambled eggs.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 Tbsp canola oil
- 10 tomatillos, husks removed, rinsed well, quartered
- 1 large jalapeño, stem removed, halved lengthwise
- ½ medium onion, halved
- 2 whole garlic cloves, peeled
  - leaves from ½ bunch fresh cilantro (about 2½ cups)
  - juice from 1 lime

1. In a large cast-iron pan over medium-high, heat the oil. Add the tomatillos, jalapeño, onion, and garlic. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the garlic becomes golden brown, 3 to 5 minutes.
2. Transfer the garlic to a blender or food processor. Continue cooking the rest of the ingredients until everything is well charred and the tomatillos begin to break apart, 3 to 5 minutes more.
3. Transfer the contents of the pan to the blender or food processor. Add the cilantro, lime juice, and a big pinch each of salt and pepper.
4. Puree, transfer to a bowl, season with more salt if needed, and serve.

Feeds 12 to 14, as an appetizer. *Nutrition per serving: 24 calories, 0 g protein, 3 g carbohydrates (1 g fiber), 1 g fat*



# Kale-Cranberry Couscous Salad

This whole shebang tastes sort of like thanksgiving, but you don't need to go through the trouble of roasting a massive turkey. It also matches well with grilled chicken breast, roasted cod, and pork chops.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

2 cups low sodium chicken or vegetable stock

1 ½ cups couscous

2 Tbsp olive oil

4 cups packed chopped kale

½ cup dried cranberries

2 Tbsp apple cider vinegar

zest of 1 lemon

½ cup chopped walnuts

**1.** In a large pan, bring the stock to a boil. Add the couscous and cook according to package instructions. Transfer to a bowl.

**2.** In the same pan over medium, heat 1 Tbsp of the oil. Add the kale and cook, stirring occasionally, until slightly charred, about 5 minutes.

**3.** Remove the pan from the heat and add the cranberries and couscous, vinegar, lemon zest, walnuts, and the remaining 1 Tbsp olive oil. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Mix well.

Feeds 8, as a side. *Nutrition per serving: 248 calories, 8 g protein, 36 g carbohydrates (3 g fiber), 9 g fat*



# Creamed Beet Tops

The problem: when you buy beets, you also pay for all their green plumage, which, if you're being honest with yourself, almost always ends up in the trash. The solution: do what high-end steakhouses do with spinach. (it also helps if you serve this beside steak.)

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

2 Tbsp butter

2 garlic cloves, minced

½ medium onion, chopped

leaves from 1 bunch beets, stems removed, leaves roughly chopped

2 Tbsp sour cream

pinch ground nutmeg

**1.** In a large nonstick pan over medium-low heat, melt the butter. Add the garlic and onion and cook until translucent, 5 to 7 minutes. Add the beet tops and cook, stirring occasionally, until very tender, 10 to 12 minutes.

**2.** Remove the pan from the heat and stir in the sour cream and nutmeg. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Feeds 2, as a side. *Nutrition per serving: 155 calories, 2 g protein, 5 g carbohydrates (1 g fiber) 14 g fat*

# Slow-Simmered Collard Greens

If you had to choose one piece of produce to walk with you down a dark alley, you'd want collard greens. They're tough and sturdy, with strong fibers reinforcing each leaf. But here's a secret: if you let them soak in a steamy bath, they reveal their softer side. You didn't hear that from this book.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- ½ medium onion, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 bunch collard greens, stems removed, roughly chopped
- ¼ cup white wine
- 2 cups low sodium chicken stock
- apple cider vinegar, to taste

1. In a large nonstick pan over medium-low heat, add the oil, onion, and garlic. Cook, stirring occasionally, till translucent, about 3 minutes.
  2. Add the collards, along with a pinch each of salt and pepper. Cook until slightly wilted, 5 to 7 minutes. Add the wine and chicken stock and cook until very tender and the liquid is almost gone, 30 to 40 minutes. Season to taste with salt, pepper, and cider vinegar.
- Feeds 6, as a side. *Nutrition per serving: 96 calories, 3 g protein, 6 g carbohydrates (2 g fiber), 6 g fat*

# Buffalo Chicken Meatballs with Tangy Blue Cheese Sauce

Feeding party guests buckets of hot wings is a great way to increase the gastrointestinal unpredictability of the evening. Skip all that and make this lighter alternative, which holds all the same flavor of bar wings, without the grease and regret.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 lb ground chicken
- 2 scallions, thinly sliced
  - leaves from 2 celery stalks, minced
- ¾ cup panko bread crumbs
- 1 large egg
- 3 Tbsp Buffalo-style hot sauce, such as Frank's Redhot
- ½ cup Greek yogurt
- 2 Tbsp crumbled blue cheese
  - juice from 1 lemon
- 1 Tbsp butter
- 4 celery stalks, cut into 4" pieces, for serving

- 1.** In a large bowl, add the chicken, scallions, celery leaves, panko, egg, 1 Tbsp hot sauce, and ¼ tsp each of salt and pepper. Using your hands, mix well and then roll into meatballs the size and shape of a golf ball. (You'll make 10 to 14 meatballs.) Place the meatballs in the fridge to firm, about 10 minutes.
- 2.** In a medium bowl, mix the yogurt, blue cheese, and lemon juice. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Reserve in the fridge.
- 3.** In a large nonstick pan over medium-low heat, melt the butter. Add the meatballs and cook, covered, turning every 3 to 4 minutes, until they're well browned and cooked through, 15 to 20 minutes total.

4. Remove the pan from the heat and stir in the remaining 2 Tbsp hot sauce until well coated. Serve immediately, drizzled with blue cheese sauce, alongside the celery.

Feeds 4. *Nutrition per serving: 307 calories, 27 g protein, 16 g carbohydrates (1 g fiber), 15 g fat*



# Rosemary, Parmesan, and Black Olive Focaccia

Your cast-iron pan does more than sear and sizzle. It's also pretty gosh-darn good at baking. Make this and you'll discover that the proof is in the pudding. Or that the facts are in the focaccia, rather.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

1½ tsp instant yeast

½ tsp salt

1¾ cups flour

2 Tbsp olive oil, plus more for brushing and drizzling

¾ cup oil-cured black olives, roughly chopped

leaves from 3 fresh rosemary sprigs, chopped

2 Tbsp freshly grated parmesan

1. Preheat your oven to warm. In a large bowl, whisk together ¾ cup warm water and the yeast. Let the mixture sit for 5 minutes. Then add the salt and, using a rubber spatula, gradually mix in 1 cup of the flour, followed by 2 Tbsp of olive oil and the rest of the flour. Stir until a loose ball of dough forms.
2. Brush a cast-iron pan with olive oil. Lightly flour your hands and a cutting board. Using your hands, lift the dough from the bowl and shape it into a ball on the cutting board. Transfer the dough to the pan and press it into a rough circle that covers about ¾ of the pan. Cover the dough with a clean kitchen towel and place everything in the oven. Let the dough rise, about 20 minutes.
3. Wearing oven mitts, remove the pan from the oven. Adjust the oven heat to 400°F. Using your fingertips, make indentations in the surface of the dough. Top the dough with the olives, rosemary, Parmesan, and a drizzle of olive oil. Return the pan to the oven and

bake till golden brown, 20 to 25 minutes. Wearing oven mitts, carefully remove the pan from the oven to a heatproof surface. Allow the focaccia to cool slightly before slicing and serving.

Feeds 8, as a side. *Nutrition per serving: 170 calories, 4 g protein, 22 g carbohydrates (1 g fiber), 7 g fat*





# Green Chile Cornbread

Chris Rock once said, “Cornbread, ain’t nothing wrong with that.” serve this warm, with a glass of cold milk, hoisted to Mr. Rock.

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## WHAT YOU’LL NEED:

- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup yellow cornmeal
- 1 Tbsp baking powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 3 eggs
- ¾ cup buttermilk
- ½ stick unsalted butter, melted, plus more for greasing
- 1 (8 oz) can diced green chiles, drained well

1. Preheat your oven to 400°F. In a large bowl, combine the flour, cornmeal, baking powder, and salt.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together the eggs and milk until well combined. Pour this mixture and the melted butter into the bowl of dry ingredients. Add the green chiles. Using a spatula, mix well.
3. Grease a large cast-iron pan. Add the batter and transfer the pan to the oven. Bake until cracks appear on the surface and a knife inserted into the center emerges clean, 25 to 30 minutes. Let cool 5 minutes before slicing and serving.

Feeds 8, as a side. *Nutrition per serving: 230 calories, 6 g protein, 32 g carbohydrates (2 g fiber), 8 g fat*



# Skillet Popcorn

Those beat-up popcorn-popping machines you see littering garage sales deserve their dejected states. Popcorn kernels need only a little oil and heat to burst into beautiful puffs of snackable deliciousness.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

### VARIATION # 1: PARMESAN-OREGANO POPCORN

2 Tbsp freshly grated parmesan

1 Tbsp dried oregano

1 tsp kosher salt

1 tsp freshly ground black pepper

### VARIATION # 2: CINNAMON-SUGAR-SPICE POPCORN

1 Tbsp dark brown sugar

1 Tbsp ground cinnamon

¼ tsp ground nutmeg

¼ tsp ground cloves

### VARIATION # 3: SNEAKY HEAT AT POPCORN

1 Tbsp paprika

1 tsp kosher salt

¼ tsp ground cayenne

In a large nonstick pan, add 2 Tbsp canola oil and 2 popcorn kernels. Cover the pan with a lid and heat over medium. When the kernels pop, add ⅓ cup of popcorn kernels. Heat, covered, shaking the pan occasionally, until all the kernels are popped, 3 to 5 minutes. Transfer the popcorn to a large bowl and shake on the seasonings while tossing.

Feeds 6, as a snack. *Nutrition (for plain popcorn): 79 calories, 1 g protein, 7 g carbohydrates (2 g fiber), 5 g fat*



# Charred Honey-Orange-Walnut Brussels Sprouts

Brussels sprouts have buddied up to bacon in recent years, riding the coattails of the popular pork product. But Brussels sprouts don't need bacon. Cut the codependency with this recipe.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 lb Brussels sprouts, trimmed and halved
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 2 Tbsp honey
  - zest from 1 orange, plus juice from ½ orange
- 1 cup chopped walnuts

**1.** In a large bowl, toss the Brussels sprouts with the olive oil, honey, orange zest, and a big pinch each of salt and pepper.

**2.** In a large cast-iron pan over medium-high heat, add the Brussels sprouts. Cook until charred on all sides, 6 to 8 minutes. Add the orange juice, walnuts, and a few grinds of pepper. Cook until glazed, about 1 minute. Transfer back to the large bowl, season with additional salt and pepper, if needed, and serve immediately.

Feeds 4, as a side. *Nutrition per serving: 375 calories, 8 g protein, 23 g carbohydrates (6 g fiber), 31 g fat*

# Chickpea Salad with Cumin, Golden Raisins, and Mint

If your plate of protein is looking a little lonely, turn to the company of this 10-minute side. Serve it warm so it can cozy up next to seared fish, roasted chicken, or grilled shrimp. It'll be there for you the next day, too, to fetch from the fridge as a chilled snack.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- ½ small onion, chopped
- ½ tsp cumin seeds
- 2 (15 oz) cans chickpeas, rinsed
- 1 large tomato, diced
- ½ cup golden raisins
- leaves from 4 stems fresh mint, chopped

1. In a large pan, add the oil, garlic, onion, and cumin seeds.
2. Adjust the heat to medium. Cook until the onion is translucent, 2 to 3 minutes.
3. Add the chickpeas, tomato, and golden raisins. Cook until the tomatoes begin to break apart, about 5 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
4. Transfer to a serving bowl and allow to cool slightly. Stir in the mint.

Feeds 6, as a side. *Nutrition per serving: 230 calories, 8 g protein, 37 g carbohydrates (6 g fiber), 6 g fat*

# Spaghetti Squash with Pesto

There's nothing wrong with regular ol' pasta, but sometimes you want a meal that won't immediately force you into a couch nap. Combine homemade pesto with just-baked squash that you spaghetti-fy with a fork and you have that meal.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 medium spaghetti squash, halved lengthwise, seeded
- 1 Tbsp olive oil, plus 2 Tbsp
- 2 Tbsp pine nuts
- 2 cups fresh basil leaves
- ½ cup freshly grated parmesan, plus more for serving
- 2 garlic cloves

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F. In a large cast-iron pan, add the squash cut side facing up. Drizzle with the 1 Tbsp olive oil and season with a big pinch each of salt and pepper. Rub the squash all over on all sides to distribute the oil and seasonings. Transfer the pan to the oven and roast until very tender, about 40 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, in a small, dry nonstick pan over medium heat, add the pine nuts. Cook, shimmying the pan frequently, until aromatic and lightly browned, 3 to 5 minutes. Transfer to a food processor or blender.
3. In the food processor or blender with the pine nuts, add the basil, Parmesan, and garlic. Pulse until the basil is pulverized. Continuing to pulse, gradually add the remaining 2 Tbsp oil until a loose paste forms. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Set aside.
4. Wearing an oven mitt, carefully transfer the pan to a heat-resistant surface. Allow to cool slightly. Using a fork, shred the squash into spaghetti-like strands. Transfer to a large bowl, mix with the pesto, and serve topped with more Parmesan.

Feeds 4. *Nutrition per serving: 210 calories, 6 g protein, 12 g carbohydrates (3 g fiber), 16 g fat*





# Kung Pao Baby Bok Choy

If you can track them down at an Asian market or online, Sichuan peppercorns will transform your spice cabinet. Their lip-tingling effects will make your shaker of crushed red-pepper flakes jealous. Their slight crunch will make your grinder of black peppercorns wish it was more in touch with its delicate side. You might start using the stuff so much your box of kosher salt could become ornery.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 2 Tbsp rice vinegar
- 2 Tbsp low-sodium soy sauce
- 1 Tbsp hoisin sauce
- 1 Tbsp honey
- 4 heads baby bok choy, halved lengthwise
- 1 Tbsp sichuan peppercorns (or 1 tsp crushed red-pepper flakes)
- 1 Tbsp chile oil
- 1 garlic clove, minced
  - sesame seeds, for garnish

1. In a small bowl, mix the vinegar, soy sauce, hoisin, and honey until the honey is dissolved.
  2. In a large nonstick pan over medium heat, add the bok choy and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of water. Close the pan with a lid and steam until the bok choy is tender, 8 to 10 minutes. Transfer to a serving dish.
  3. Carefully wipe the hot pan clean with paper towels and add the peppercorns, chile oil, and garlic. Cook over medium heat until aromatic, about 1 minute. Add the soy sauce mixture and cook, stirring frequently, until slightly thickened and saucelike, 2 to 4 minutes. Pour over the bok choy and serve immediately.
- Feeds 4, as a side. *Nutrition per serving: 88 calories, 2 g protein, 11 g carbohydrates (2 g fiber), 5 g fat*



# Rosemary Glazed Carrots

This recipe is almost unfair. It'll take you about 15 minutes to cook, yet you'll be hearing about how good it was for days. You could tell those giving the adulation that it contains five ingredients, all of which they probably have in their very same kitchen. Or you could just keep quiet and tell them to keep it coming.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 cup low-sodium chicken stock
- 1 Tbsp butter
- 8 medium to large carrots, cut into ½"-thick circles
- 1 Tbsp honey
- leaves from 1 stem rosemary, chopped

1. In a large nonstick pan over medium, heat the stock and butter.
  2. When the butter melts, add the carrots and cover the pan with a lid. Cook until the carrots are slightly tender, about 7 minutes.
  3. Remove the lid and cook until no liquid remains, about 5 minutes.
  4. Add the honey and rosemary and cook until glazed, 2 to 3 minutes.
- Season to taste with salt and pepper and serve.

Feeds 4, as a side. *Nutrition per serving: 123 calories, 3 g protein, 20 g carbohydrates (4 g fiber), 4 g fat*

# Salt and Vinegar Kale Chips

Will these replace your usual bag of potato chips? It depends how much you love kale. Are they a great way to learn to love kale if you're not sure of your feelings toward it? Absolutely.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

1 bunch Tuscan kale aka Lacinato or dinosaur kale, washed and thoroughly dried

2 Tbsp olive oil

sea salt

1 Tbsp malt vinegar

**1.** In a large bowl, add the kale, oil, and a big pinch of sea salt. Using your hands, massage the oil into the nooks of each leaf until well coated.

**2.** In a large nonstick pan over medium heat, cook the kale until crisp, turning occasionally 8 to 12 minutes. Add the vinegar, toss quickly to coat, and transfer to a serving plate.

Feeds 4, as an appetizer or side. *Nutrition per serving: 93 calories, 3 g protein, 6 g carbohydrates (1 g fiber), 7 g fat*

# Snap Peas with Peanuts and Chili-Garlic Sauce

Don't default to ho-hum mixed greens with boring bottled dressing to "get your vegetables." there's a world of produce out there beyond lettuce. This side takes 10 minutes. Blister snap peas in a hot, oiled pan. Toss in chopped peanuts, sliced scallions, a spoonful of chili-garlic sauce, and a pinch of salt. No bottled dressing required.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 Tbsp sesame or canola oil
- 4 cups snap peas, stem ends removed
- 2 scallions, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup unsalted peanuts, chopped
- 1 Tbsp chili garlic-sauce

1. In a large nonstick pan over medium-high, heat the oil.
2. Add the snap peas and cook till blistered, 5 to 7 minutes.
3. Remove from the heat and add the rest of the ingredients, along with a pinch of salt. Serve immediately.

Feeds 4, as a side. *Nutrition per serving: 146 calories, 5 g protein, 13 g carbohydrates (4 g fiber), 8 g fat*

# Balsamic Mushrooms with Herbs

Before you hate on mushrooms, first look at what led you to your distaste. If it was because you had to choke down one too many sliced raw white mushrooms from some crummy salad bar, it's time to reconsider. If you cook mushrooms correctly, they're robust, meaty, and nearly steaklike. This is how you cook mushrooms correctly.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 Tbsp canola oil
- 6 oz mushrooms (such as cremini, shitake, oyster, enoki and/or trumpet), sliced
- 1 Tbsp butter
- 1 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 Tbsp chopped herbs (such as thyme, rosemary, parsley, and or chives)

1. In a large cast-iron pan over medium-high, heat the oil.
2. When the oil shimmers, add the mushrooms. Cook, stirring occasionally, until well browned, 5 to 7 minutes.
3. Add the butter and the balsamic. Cook, stirring constantly, until a glaze forms, about 1 minute.
4. Remove the pan from the heat, season the mushrooms to taste with salt and pepper, and stir in the herbs. Serve immediately.

Feeds 2, as a side. *Nutrition per serving: 139 calories, 2 g protein, 5 g carbohydrates (1 g fiber), 13 g fat*





# Eggplant Fries

If there was one piece of produce on this planet that could be an alien in disguise, it would be the eggplant. It's purple, oblong, and shiny. Stick two googly eyes anywhere on the thing and experience the unsettling result. Good thing eggplant is delicious, especially breaded, lightly fried, and dunked into warm marinara sauce. Eat the invaders!

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

¼ cup flour

3 egg whites, beaten

½ cup bread crumbs

¼ cup canola oil

1 small eggplant, peeled and cut into ¼" × 4" strips

½ cup marinara sauce

- 1.** Set up a breading station: On a large plate, spread out the flour. On another, pour the egg whites. On another, dump the bread crumbs. Add a big pinch each of salt and pepper. Mix well. Spread in 1 layer.
- 2.** Working 2 at a time, drag the eggplant pieces through the flour, then the egg (shaking off any excess), and then the bread crumbs. Place on a plate.
- 3.** In a large cast-iron pan over medium heat, add the canola oil. When the oil is hot, add the breaded eggplant, working in batches if necessary, turning frequently until crisp, 1 to 2 minutes total. Transfer to a plate lined with paper towels to drain.
- 4.** In a small pan, heat the sauce. Serve with the eggplant fries. Top the fries with salt.

Feeds 4, as an appetizer. *Nutrition per serving: 177 calories, 6 g protein, 20 g carbohydrates (3 g fiber), 8 g fat*

▶ **HOLY \$@%! KITCHEN TRICK: THE INCREDIBLE OIL TEST!**

Dropping breaded ingredients into oil that isn't hot enough will result in soggy, gummy bread crumbs. As you heat the oil, first look for ripples to begin to move across the surface. Then take a pinch of bread crumbs and flick them into the oil. If they begin to bubble and sizzle, you're good to go.

# DESSERT

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Are you full? Could you squeeze in a little dessert? Don't worry; none of the recipes that follows is too heavy, too sweet, or too over-the-top. Apologies for making you have to find that how-to on chocolate lava cake brownie waffle milkshakes elsewhere.

## ▶ HOW SWEET

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When you're cooking at home, dessert doesn't have to be a sugar bomb. The recipes that follow ease up on the sweet stuff, but how little (or how much) you add is up to you.



## **THE RECIPES**

Giant Oatmeal-Almond-Craisin Cookie

Poached Pears

Blueberry Cobbler

Cinnamon–Brown Sugar Apples with Walnuts

Raspberry and Thyme Dutch Baby

Chocolate–Peanut Butter–Banana Cake



# Giant Oatmeal-Almond-Craisin Cookie

It's formidable! It's substantive! It's delicious! Even normal-size cookies quiver and cower in the presence of the giant oatmeal-almond-craisin cookie! Bow down!

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 cup raisins
- 2 sticks butter, plus more for greasing
- 1½ cups flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp ground nutmeg
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 cup dark brown sugar
- ¼ cup white sugar
- 1 egg, plus 1 egg yolk
- 1 tsp almond extract
- 2 cups quick-cooking oats
- ¼ cup sliced almonds

1. In a medium bowl, combine the Raisins with 3 Tbsp water. Set aside to soak.
2. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a large cast-iron pan with butter.
3. In a medium bowl, mix the flour, baking soda, salt, nutmeg, and cinnamon. Set aside.
4. In a large bowl, using an electric mixer, combine the butter and sugars. With the mixer running, add the egg, egg yolk, almond extract, and the flour mixture. Turn off the mixer and add the oats, drained Raisins, and almonds. Stir until combined. Transfer to the

cast-iron pan and place the pan in the oven. Bake until the cookie is browned and a skewer inserted into the center emerges clean, 25 to 35 minutes.

**5.** Using oven mitts, carefully remove the pan from the oven. Allow to cool 10 minutes before slicing and serving.

Feeds 14. *Nutrition per serving: 326 calories, 4 g protein, 44 g carbohydrates (2 g fiber), 16 g fat*



# Poached Pears

Pears, on their own, are tasty. Pears, slow-cooked in booze and sugar, are even better. Don't skip the anise or cloves. They each help infuse the cooking liquid with an aromatic backbone.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

1 cup red wine

2 Tbsp sugar

2 pods star anise

4 cloves

3 pears, cored and sliced

**1.** In a large nonstick pan over medium-low, heat the wine, sugar, anise, and cloves. Stir until dissolved.

**2.** Add the pears, cover, and simmer, turning the fruit every now and then, about 20 minutes.

**3.** Remove from the heat, allow to cool slightly, and serve warm.

Feeds 6. *Nutrition per serving: 100 calories, 0 g protein, 19 g carbohydrates (3 g fiber), 0 g fat*



# Blueberry Cobbler

This recipe works best if you have a smallish pan (a 6½" one is perfect). A large pan will deliver a delicious end result, too, maybe just not as fluffy. It all depends how particular you are about your cobblers.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 pint fresh blueberries
- ½ cup sugar
- ¼ cup lightly packed brown sugar
- ½ cup plus 2 Tbsp flour
- 2 Tbsp lemon juice
- ¾ tsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp salt
- ½ cup milk
- ½ stick butter

1. Place a medium cast-iron pan in the oven and preheat the oven to 350°F. In a medium bowl, mix the berries, ¼ cup sugar, the brown sugar, the 2 Tbsp flour, and the lemon juice.
2. In a large bowl, add the ½ cup flour, the remaining ¼ cup sugar, baking powder, salt, and milk. Mix thoroughly (if a few lumps remain, that's okay).
3. Using oven mitts, carefully remove the pan from the oven. Drop the butter into the hot pan. When the butter melts and bubbles, add the batter, followed by the berry mixture. Bake until the crust is golden, about 30 minutes. Carefully remove the pan, allow to cool slightly, slice, and serve.

Feeds 6. *Nutrition per serving: 244 calories, 2 g protein, 41 g carbohydrates (2 g fiber), 9 g fat*

# Cinnamon–Brown Sugar Apples with Walnuts

Not only does this dessert taste great, it also doubles as an air freshener for your home as you cook it. Shove it, Yankee Candle.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 4 Tbsp butter
- ½ cup chopped walnuts
- 4 medium apples, cored and sliced
- 1 Tbsp brown sugar
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp ground nutmeg

1. In a large nonstick pan over medium-low heat, melt the butter. Add the walnuts and apples and cook until the apples are tender and slightly browned, 12 to 15 minutes.
2. Add the brown sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, and a pinch of salt. Serve immediately, ideally with vanilla ice cream.

Feeds 4. *Nutrition per serving: 303 calories, 3 g protein, 30 g carbohydrates (6 g fiber), 21 g fat*

### ▶ **HOLY \$@%! KITCHEN TRICK: THE APPLE CORE DISAPPEARING ACT!**

There's no reason to own an apple corer. In fact, you already own one. It's called a knife. Just stand the apple on its end and slice off its sides, working around the core.

# Raspberry and Thyme Dutch Baby

The easiest dessert in the world is a spoonful of peanut butter, straight out of the jar, topped with dark chocolate chips. That, however, is not a particularly classy way to end a meal with someone else. So turn to the world's second easiest dessert, which is actually way more impressive than many not-so-easy desserts.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

3 eggs

½ cup flour

½ cup milk

1 Tbsp sugar

½ stick butter

1 cup raspberries, lightly mashed with the back of a spoon

leaves from 4 stems fresh thyme

powdered sugar

1. Place a large cast-iron pan in the oven and preheat the oven to 425°F.
2. In a blender or food processor, add the eggs, flour, milk, and sugar, and blend until homogeneous.
3. Wearing an oven mitt, carefully transfer the hot pan from the oven to a heatproof surface. Add the butter and swirl to melt. Add the batter and place the pan back into the oven.
4. Bake until the mixture puffs and is well browned, about 20 minutes.
5. Wearing an oven mitt, carefully transfer the hot pan from the oven back to the heatproof surface. Top with raspberries, thyme, and powdered sugar, to taste.

Feeds 4. *Nutrition per serving: 268 calories, 8 g protein, 23 g carbohydrates (3 g fiber), 16 g fat*



# Chocolate–Peanut Butter–Banana Cake

The peanut butter and banana make it, um, healthy! Actually, you know what? You should never feel guilty about eating cake, especially when it's warm out of the oven.

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- ½ stick butter
- 1 cup flour
- ¾ cup sugar
- 3 Tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ½ cup peanut butter
- 2 bananas, sliced

**1.** Preheat your oven to 350°F. In a large, nonstick, oven-safe pan over low heat, melt the butter. As the butter melts, in a large bowl, add the flour, sugar, cocoa powder, and baking soda. Mix well. Then stir in the buttermilk, egg, vanilla, and the melted butter, leaving enough in the pan to lightly coat the surface.

**2.** Pour the batter into the pan and transfer to the oven. Bake until a toothpick inserted into the center emerges clean, about 30 minutes. Wearing an oven mitt, carefully remove the pan and place it on a heatproof surface. Using a fish spatula, transfer the cake to a serving platter. Top with peanut butter and banana slices.

Feeds 8. *Nutrition per serving: 328 calories, 8 g protein, 43 g carbohydrates (3 g fiber), 15 g fat*

# CLEANING UP?

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Ah, man. *Cleaning?* “Do I really have to?” you ask. Well, unless you’re interested in keeping cockroaches, fruit flies, and foodborne illnesses as pets, yes, you have to. Clean kitchens, like clean engines, are efficient vehicles for high performance. This said, cleaning up sucks. But there are ways to make cleaning up after cooking suck less.







## **ESTABLISH ORDER**

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Wherever possible, put stuff where it belongs. Return spices to their place in the organizational system you've devised for your cupboards. Place the spatula in the same area of the same drawer you always put it in. Put the milk on the shelf it came from. This may sound obsessive, but nothing frustrates a taxed home cook more than not being able to find something when it's most needed.

## **ACTUALLY DO THE DISHES**

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No, this does not include delegating the task to your dishwasher. This means taking the time to hand-scrub each plate, each utensil, and each tool. Doing the washing yourself always results in cleaner dishes, no matter how pricey the bottle of dishwashing detergent is that you buy. Plus, the action of standing on your feet helps prevent you from plodding off to the couch and falling asleep uncomfortably gestating a food baby.

## **SCRUB DOWN EVERYTHING**

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Walking into a grody kitchen—crumbs dusting the countertops, dehydrated noodles adhering to the sink, aromas of food funk permeating the air—doesn't pump you up to cook. After you cook, expend the 163 seconds it takes to spritz some kitchen cleaner and wipe it down with paper towels. The little elbow grease this requires will pay off big-time the next time you're ready to prepare another meal.

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## **CLEAN AS YOU GO**

The best way to clean your kitchen is to tackle it while you're cooking. If you have downtime during a recipe—say, waiting for a sauce to simmer—instead of zoning out with your smartphone, do something productive. Scrub some dishes. Put away ingredients you're no longer using. Compost kitchen scraps. The more work you do while you're cooking, the more time you'll have after eating to zone out with your smartphone.



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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Paul Kita is the James Beard Award–winning food and nutrition editor at *Men's Health*, the world's largest men's lifestyle magazine brand with 39 international editions in 44 countries and a worldwide readership of 23 million. He's the founder of MensHealth.com's popular food and cooking blog, *Guy Gourmet*. In 2013, he cowrote *Guy Gourmet: Great Chefs' Amazing Meals for a Lean & Healthy Body*. Paul has appeared on the Travel Channel and *Fox & Friends*, as well as numerous national radio and broadcast stations. He received a bachelor's degree in journalism from Ohio University. He lives in Allentown, Pennsylvania, with his wife, Meghan, and her cat, Nermal.

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