

THE PROGRAM

Get with it.



For Jake & Rex

The greatest medicine of all is teaching people how not to need it.
– Hippocrates (attrib.)

DRAFT

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INTRODUCTION

This is me.



2010

2016

Apparently I was quite the fatso in 2010.

Okay, maybe I wasn't exactly obese but I sure wasn't in shape. Unless Liberty Bell is a shape.

Interestingly, though, I didn't really feel like I was that out of shape back then. I mowed a half-acre lawn with a push mower once a week, ran up and down stairs almost daily to do laundry and chased constantly after a toddler. *I thought* I was healthy.

But little did I know my lifestyle was killing me.

I've always cooked for myself or my family – cooking your own meals is imperative when it comes to a nutritious diet – but for years too often I was using unhealthy ingredients.

And then there were the can or two of soda per day, the ice cream, the cereal, the beers, the peanut M&Ms, the chips and salsa, the french fries, the pizza and the occasional fast food.

Oh, and then there was the baseball-size malignant tumor growing in my neck.

Can't forget about that one.

Did my standard American diet – abundant chemical- and sugar-laden processed food – cause my thyroid cancer? I don't know; there's no way to prove it. But it sure wasn't the cure.

And it sure wasn't the cure for those sexy love handles, either.

The funny thing is, I'm probably making it sound like all I did was sit on the couch inhaling bags of potato chips and eat at Burger King every day for lunch. But nothing could be further from the truth.

I simply ate poorly *in moderation*.

I worked at McDonald's for three years when I was a kid and even then I'd eat their salads during my lunch break just as often as I would their cheeseburgers and fries. I've been conscious of my weight and looks since I was 15 when, while sitting in my boxers on an exam table one afternoon at my high school,

a doctor conducting a baseball physical decided to pinch some extra fat on my hip and say, "A little too much Old Mil(waukee) and Twinkies, huh?"

He literally said, "Old Mil," like I was his drinking buddy.

My immediate response was, "Whatever, I drink Miller Lite!"

But the shame had already set in. I remember thinking, *With doctors like this, it's no wonder some girls are anorexic.*

But you know what? I was happy he said what he did. Obviously he could've been a little more diplomatic and professional about it, but it definitely made me think about my diet. Even in college I would eat deli sandwiches in the lunch hall and I often chose frozen yogurt instead of ice cream. I'd bake french fries instead of deep frying them when I cooked for myself, and I ate lots of fresh salads. I thought I was doing the right thing. Some of these dietary tips even helped one of my housemates lose 30 pounds after he asked me if I would help him eat better. But better doesn't necessarily mean *well* when it comes to your overall health.

So what about the Belly of 2010 up there in that photo?

Admittedly, I wasn't in the most flattering of positions. Your pecs all but disappear when you reach upward and, considering I was half drunk at a resort pool during a wedding, I wasn't giving much thought to sucking in my gut. It also didn't help that I didn't even know I was being photographed.

But pictures don't lie.

What's most profound to me now is that I had been *aware* of the importance of healthy eating for the previous 20 years. I'd already been cooking the majority of meals I ate *precisely* so I could control what went into my body. I *valued* the importance of regular exercise.

Yet this still wasn't enough to prevent me from carrying at least 25 pounds I didn't even realize I could've (and should've) been going without.

And if I was ignorant to this, what about everyone else who was less mindful about their health than I was?

More to the point, if my diet was fairly healthy but still unhealthy enough to make the outside of my body look the way it did, what in the world did the *inside* look like?

That's the part that scares me the most.

What I never understood for so many years is that you can cook food in ways that are healthier than others, but bad ingredients are still bad ingredients. Processed foods advertising "zero trans fats" still contain tasty unhealthy fats. Chemical preservatives, additives and food dyes are still chemicals. Natural and artificial sweeteners are still sugar or worse. And your favorite packaged foods advertised as "low fat" are still stacked with addictively high doses of sugar and salt to offset reduced amounts of fat.

What does this all add up to? A diet of toxic food that is making us fat and sick.

All those years I ate “healthy” salads but covered them with my favorite bottled salad dressings? In addition to added sugars, those dressings also probably contained propylene glycol. You may know it better as an ingredient used in antifreeze. It’s a multi-faceted additive often used to thicken dairy products and salad dressings that the Food and Drug Administration regards (along with many other harmful additives) as “generally safe.”

But enough of that for now. If you’re reading this I’ve already talked to you about our new lifestyle guide and you’ve told me you’d like to give it a shot, maybe to drop some weight or, more importantly, just to begin eating and living well. Or maybe you just happened to stumble across our website looking for spices and hot sauce and this piqued your interest. Regardless, to do this you need to commit to doing a few things up front:

- Stop buying and eating packaged, processed food (You’re the chef now!)
 - Give up sodas and processed fruit juices
 - Avoid fast food
 - Eat only hormone-free meat (buy local, grass-fed, non-GMO products whenever possible)
 - Consume only hormone-free milk (even better, switch from dairy to coconut or almond milk if possible)
 - **Eat only real, whole food!**
- Consume a sufficient amount of water every day
- Modest physical activity (Use the included exercise program 15 to 20 minutes per night while you watch TV.)

Depending on your own personal addictions—we all have our cravings and guilty pleasures—some of the items on this list may be more difficult to implement than others. But all I ask is that you take this program seriously for **four weeks** and take inventory of the results, from any weight loss that occurs to how you feel on a daily basis.

I don’t necessarily expect this to be easy, and it certainly may not be fun at the beginning. But my goal is to prove to you that you can cook healthy meals at home *that taste just as good as or even better than* the junk you eat that you know isn’t any good for you anyway before you even put it in your mouth.

After all, how often do you *really* get a meal from a big box restaurant that tastes as good as one that you can make yourself at home? The truth is, much of our unhealthy eating is done out of sheer convenience because we’re always on the go and it’s easier to pick up food on the road. So a big part of this program focuses on encouraging you to choose healthy meals that can be cooked easily as well as helping you get into the routine of preparing them in advance.

I’ve lost count of how many times I’ve heard people say they’re too busy to cook meals from scratch. But really it’s not that you don’t have time to cook at home; it’s that you don’t have time to go to the gym too. Yes, lives are busy and schedules are demanding. But unless your family planning discussions

hinged on feeding your kids nothing but prepared, processed foods every single day, you had to have understood that you'd be cooking meals for them.

Peeling an orange for your toddler is a form of cooking for her.

So it's usually just an excuse when people say they don't have time to cook. What they most likely mean is they don't have the willingness to adjust their schedules, alter convenient routines, learn to prepare food themselves or maybe even give up an enjoyable personal activity, any or all of which likely would allow for more time to do the most important thing in their lives (whether they realize its importance or not): feeding their bodies or the bodies of their loved ones healthy fuels that are critically important to getting or staying healthy, staving off potentially deadly illnesses and living a long, full life.

Maybe you're thinking that all of this is easier said than done, and you might be right. But I'm about to shatter some conventional wisdom that you've probably taken for granted for years. You DO NOT need to exercise regularly to lose weight or maintain a lean physique.

Weight management begins and ends in the kitchen.

Let me put that another way: ***Establishing and maintaining your ideal weight is 100% diet.***

ONE. HUNDRED. PERCENT. DIET.

For decades we've been inundated with exercise programs for sale – we hear a lot about “80/20” rules, the 8-minute this, the 10-day that – but the importance of exercising for purposes of weight management pales significantly in comparison to the importance of maintaining a healthy diet.

Preparing home-cooked meals certainly can be time-consuming. But hopefully any feelings of doubt you may be having with regard to being able to pull this off can be assuaged by knowing you don't also need to set aside time for the treadmill every day to look great.

I'm not saying everyone should jettison physical activity – staying active is a critical part of living a healthy lifestyle – but I am saying that there is no need to incorporate weight lifting or exercise programs into your already-busy schedule if you're eating the right foods. Chasing after the kids or grandkids, shooting hoops with the guys or walking around the block are all perfectly effective ways to get exercise.

So while there undoubtedly is value to the simple workout program provided at the end of this book, it isn't a vital component to shedding weight and keeping it off. It can help to expedite weight loss when combined with healthy eating, but it's more important to focus on the food you're putting into your body than on the exercise routines you're doing.

Too often we exercise just to combat the negative consequences of the unhealthy food we're eating in the first place. It's much wiser simply to eat food that doesn't require us to work it off.

Another goal of this book is to prove that you have the ability to change your addictions by retraining your taste buds to appreciate the taste of real food versus the artificially intense, chemically-enhanced flavors that are the result of processed food. There aren't many people who would deny that Doritos taste great, but in my own experience I've noticed that I now prefer my homemade plantain chips and guacamole just as much *mentally* as I do tastebudally because I know *they're good for me* in addition to tasting great.

In short, I've noticed I'm now addicted to being healthy over and above anything else. That goes a long way toward overcoming the urge to cheat with that fast food cheeseburger. It's not that I'd worry too much about falling off the wagon or putting on any unwanted weight by doing it just once; it's that it's probably made of cancer and that crap just doesn't belong in the human body.

One of the best things about this program is that there are *no alcohol restrictions*. That's definitely worthy of italics, no? In fact, some studies show that moderate intake of alcohol can be good for you.

I'm not making this up.

I'm not saying you should dust a six pack of IPAs every night, especially if you're trying to lose weight, but a couple glasses of wine or a nightcap of your favorite spirit a few times a week isn't going to throw you off track. I've even included some fantastic frozen drink recipes that are made with fresh fruit and no added sugar and practically double as a meal because they're made with real food.

Hey, everyone deserves a pool day every now and then.

Here's my suggestion: If you're concerned about your alcohol intake negatively affecting your weight, exercise at least as many days a week as you drink alcohol and you should be just fine.

If you like delicious food and you're looking to eat healthy, lose weight or just maintain a fit body and lifestyle, THE PROGRAM is for you. I mean, who doesn't like to eat great-tasting food and look sexy?

I probably associate most closely with the paleo and clean eating philosophies, but I don't specifically subscribe to any one outlook. I believe it's important to eat sensibly, but I don't like rigid rules. There's no calorie counting here and I don't believe in the complete elimination of any natural food items like beans, rice or salt. I mean, what the heck's the point of eating *anything* if you can't enhance its flavor with salt?

A good diet begins with preparing your own food using unprocessed ingredients. Period. That scares a lot of people because too many people think they can't cook. If I'm talking about you, don't worry. You're going to become a cook because I'm providing the recipes for you and most of them are very simple to execute if you follow the instructions.

My philosophy is pretty simple: Purchase or grow your own natural ingredients (organic whenever possible), use them to prepare your own meals and don't buy and eat processed food. Mix in a little exercise and determination and you should be good to go.

In other words, use your head. All the preservatives, additives, sugars and chemicals that are pumped into commercially packaged food are much worse for you than, for instance, peanuts, whole grains or green beans, all of which are banned on the paleo diet. If you must eat cake, at least make it and bake it yourself using real, unprocessed ingredients.

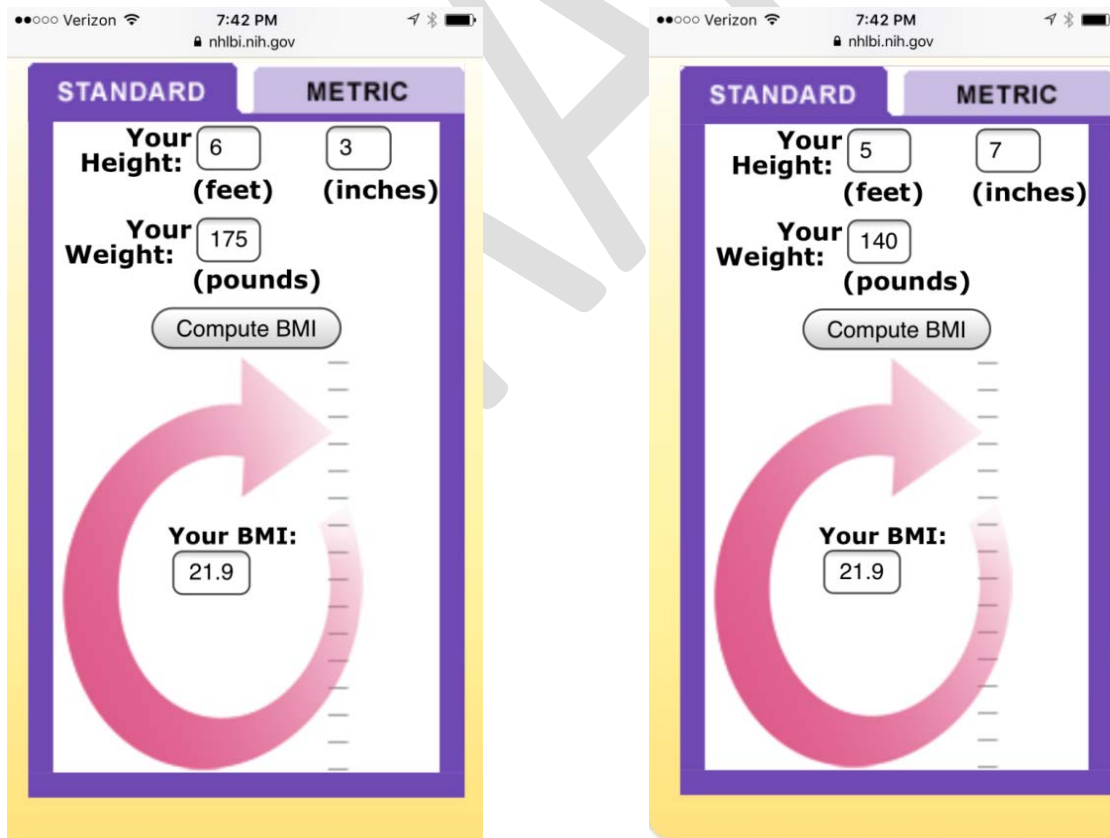
Remember, this is a new lifestyle.

Here's the kicker: When you feed your body the fuel it actually wants and needs – fruits, vegetables, seeds, nuts, beans, healthy fats such as virgin olive oil, virgin coconut oil and avocado, and lean meats like wild salmon, bison, chicken, turkey and venison – it will reward you for it.

Your body will tell you when it needs food, and when you give it what it wants (not the food *you* want, necessarily, but the food *it* wants), your weight will take care of itself. It quite simply will be what your body wants it to be when you maintain a healthy diet and lifestyle.

And I can prove it.

Below you'll find snapshots of body mass index (BMI) calculations for me (left) and my girlfriend (right). BMI is a measure of body fat based on height and weight.



Our diets essentially are the same because I do the vast majority of meal planning, preparation and cooking for our family, but even I was surprised to discover that our respective BMI scores are *identical*. Not only do they fall in the middle of the normal range, they're exact right down to the decimal place.

Adult Body Mass Index Chart

		Weight (lbs)																							
		120	130	140	150	160	170	180	190	200	210	220	230	240	250	260	270	280	290	300	320	340	360	380	400
Height (in)	60	23	25	27	29	31	33	35	37	39	41	43	45	47	49	51	53	55	57	59	63	66	70	74	78
	62	22	24	26	27	29	31	33	35	37	38	40	42	44	46	48	49	51	53	55	59	62	66	70	73
	64	21	22	24	26	28	29	31	33	34	36	38	40	41	43	45	46	48	50	52	55	58	62	65	69
	66	19	21	23	24	26	27	29	31	32	34	36	37	39	40	42	44	45	47	49	52	55	58	61	65
	68	18	20	21	23	24	26	27	29	30	32	34	35	37	38	40	41	43	44	46	48	52	55	58	61
	70	17	19	20	22	23	24	26	27	29	30	32	33	35	36	37	39	40	42	43	46	49	52	55	57
	72	16	18	19	20	22	23	24	26	27	29	30	31	33	34	35	37	38	39	41	43	46	49	52	54
	74	15	17	18	19	21	22	23	24	26	27	28	30	31	32	33	35	36	37	39	41	44	46	49	51
	76	15	16	17	18	20	21	22	23	24	26	27	28	29	30	32	33	34	35	37	40	41	44	46	49
			Underweight				Normal Weight				Overweight				Obese				Extremely Obese						

The Diabetes Research Center ~ 802-847-8903 ~ diabetes.research@uvm.edu

A BMI of 30 or greater is considered obese, overweight if it's between 25-29.9, normal if it's 18.5-24.9 and underweight if it's less than 18.5. BMI doesn't differentiate between body fat and muscle mass, so there are some exceptions to the guidelines. For example, bodybuilders or football players who have a lot of muscle bulk may have a misleadingly high BMI but not be overweight.

So while BMI may not be an exact science, it certainly appears that scores derived from keeping our diet constant amid variables of height and weight indicate not only the validity of the BMI chart relative to the average person but also the legitimacy and effectiveness of THE PROGRAM itself.

Perhaps the best part about this cookbook is that once you start cooking the meals, you realize very quickly which types of ingredients comprise meals most suitable for a healthy diet and lifestyle. So eventually you probably won't even need my help. I'm betting you'll be whipping up your own delectable, nutritious creations in no time at all.

THE MODERATION MYTH

The phrase “everything in moderation” is a nearly universal mantra. Many people believe it’s okay to eat unhealthy food in moderation because, of course, they’re not doing it all the time. But instead of its being the reason they’re relatively healthy, it’s just as likely it’s *precisely* the reason they’re unhealthy and overweight.

Even I used to buy into this concept. I never realized I was at least 25 pounds overweight until I saw photos of myself after I had shed the fat, and that’s the point at which I knew I must’ve been doing something wrong for so many years prior to that.

Simply put, “everything in moderation” is a dangerous idea because we use it to justify making poor dietary decisions. But what exactly *is* moderation? Does it mean doing something once a month? Once a week? Once a day? It can be defined differently by different people. And that’s exactly why it’s a flawed mentality.

Instead of using the moderation theory as an excuse to consume high fat, high sugar *meals* “every now and then,” I believe you should apply it instead only to the individual *ingredients* comprising the meals you eat. For example, you should eat whole grains, dairy and sugar in moderation (if at all), where this is defined as a treat no more than once or twice per week.

When I want to give my kids an ice cream treat, I’ll make it from scratch. I’ll use coconut milk, fresh fruit and raw honey. If they’re lucky I’ll even add a handful of dark chocolate chips. But I don’t make ice cream any more often than once every couple weeks. Usually it’s less frequently than that, and this treat arguably is good for you.

But that’s my moderation mindset.

The secret to shedding body fat and maintaining a lean physique is to ensure that your body primarily fuels itself with healthy fats rather than easily metabolized carbohydrates like refined grains and sugars. Note that I said *easily metabolized* carbs.

Carbohydrates are essential to a healthy diet because your body converts them to glucose (sugar), which provides energy. However, eating too many carbs that can be digested quickly will not allow your body to access stored fat because it will simply use all of that glucose as fuel instead.

The hormone insulin is produced in the pancreas and is a main regulator of glucose levels in the blood. When you eat, glucose levels rise and insulin is released into the bloodstream. Insulin is responsible for moving glucose from the blood into cells where it can be used for energy.

However, this isn’t its only function. Insulin also sends signals to fat cells. It tells your fat cells to pick up fat from the bloodstream and store it, thus preventing it from being used as energy. Therefore, if your blood sugar surges – or spikes – insulin can “lock” fat into your cells. And the more fat you store, the fatter you become. This is why some medical professionals refer to insulin as a fat storage hormone.

Keeping blood sugar levels steady and preventing insulin spikes therefore is the key to enabling your body to burn fat for energy. So it's crucially important for you to understand what causes insulin spikes in the first place.

When it comes to carbs, the more complex the better. Fiber and starch are the two types of complex carbohydrates, which are found in natural foods like fruits, vegetables, nuts, beans and whole grains such as quinoa and buckwheat.

Simple or refined carbohydrates, on the other hand, comprise processed sugars and refined grains. These garbage carbs – “garbs,” as I like to call them – generally are added to foods, whether made in a factory or at home, and include sucrose (table sugar), brown sugar and high fructose corn syrup as well as grains that have undergone processing to remove the bran and germ of the grain, stripping them of fiber, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. The primary dietary sources of refined carbs are added sugars, sodas, white flour, white bread, white rice, pasta, breakfast cereals and just about everything found in the snack and candy aisles.

Foods containing complex carbohydrates, such as broccoli and sweet potatoes, are good for you because they contain more nutrients and are higher in fiber than foods containing simple or refined carbs. Natural substances like fiber slow carbohydrate digestion and the entry of glucose into the bloodstream. Therefore, they don't raise blood sugar as much as sugars and refined grain products do.

To quote Dr. Mark Hyman, Director of the Cleveland Clinic Center for Functional Medicine, “Eating fat doesn't make you fat – sugar does.”

Sugar is metabolized quickly by the body and therefore provides almost instantaneous bursts of energy – i.e., the sugar high, which is a very real concept – but as a result the processed sugary foods leave you unsatisfied and hungry, which often leads to continual eating. And if you're simply replacing these nutritionally devoid foods with more of the same, you're working on a recipe for disaster because excess sugar intake results in fat storage.

So if you're carrying more weight than you'd like, there's a good chance you're feeding your body too many foods that are quickly and easily converted to glucose. If you want to lose weight, you need to get your body to switch from burning sugar (and other garbage carbs) for energy to burning fat. Because your body can only feed on what it's fed, this process is up to you. Not only do healthy fats (those found in virgin olive oils and coconut oil, avocado and tree nuts) trigger your metabolism to burn fat, they have superb nutritional value so they keep you feeling full longer which means you'll need to eat less frequently as well.

But why are we gorging on so much junk food in the first place?

Eating processed foods high in fat, sugar and salt stimulates the reward system of the brain. This results in the release of dopamine into the brain's pleasure centers, causing predictable and often obsessive pleasure-seeking behavior. So when you eat junk food, you naturally feel good and in turn fuel a

dependence on it. You therefore not only crave junk food, you also over-eat it to satisfy your addiction-driven cravings.

To put it bluntly, there's no way you're eating junk food in moderation. Even if you think you are. If you're making artificially flavored, chemically enhanced processed foods part of your daily diet, chances are you're addicted to it. Even if you don't even know it.

In short, this isn't all your fault. Just as cigarette manufacturers add nicotine to cigarettes and pharmaceutical companies push opiate-based pain pills to keep their customers addicted to their products and therefore dependent upon them in order to keep the money rolling in, the big food manufacturers likewise understand exactly what they're doing by stuffing foods full of fats and sugars. So food addiction is very real.

The first step in breaking your junk food addiction is recognizing you have one. I mentioned earlier that a little bit of exercise and determination will go a long way toward adopting this new lifestyle. That's true. But don't think I'm telling you to just "have a little will power" and have a nice day. Sometimes that's easier said than done when you're addicted to the food you've been eating for years. It would be like telling a heroin addict to just have some will power and put down the needle.

Having determination or will power is simply the first step to all the *work* you also have to do to kick an addiction.

That said, I can't stand it when I hear people say that addiction is a disease. Addictions *cause* disease. Casually dismissing addiction as a disease itself is the addict's way to justify feeding his addictions in the first place. **Addiction is rooted in choice and weakness.** You have to *choose* to light a crack pipe the very first time. You have to *choose* to smoke cigarettes or to snort cocaine. And you have to *choose* to buy fast food burgers, frozen pizzas, breakfast cereal, crackers shaped like goldfish and cellophane-wrapped brownies and cinnamon buns for yourself and your family.

If you want to get healthy and stay healthy, you have to stop making excuses for why you can't. The best part about addiction merely being a symptom of choice is that you can *choose* to reverse it.

You can't choose to reverse cancer.

As I said in the previous section, this isn't necessarily going to be easy. It might be hard as hell. Overcoming your food addiction could be one of the most difficult things you ever do in your life, depending on your level of severity. But it can be done. And it starts by digging deep, admitting you have a problem, identifying a solution and getting to work.

On the other hand, if you know you're a junk food junkie and you just don't care, well ... that's on you. This program is for people who want to take control of their bodies and overall health.

Your solution awaits.

THE ASSAULT ON CHILDREN

“Lucky Charms. Chocolate milk. Cookies. Apple slices.”

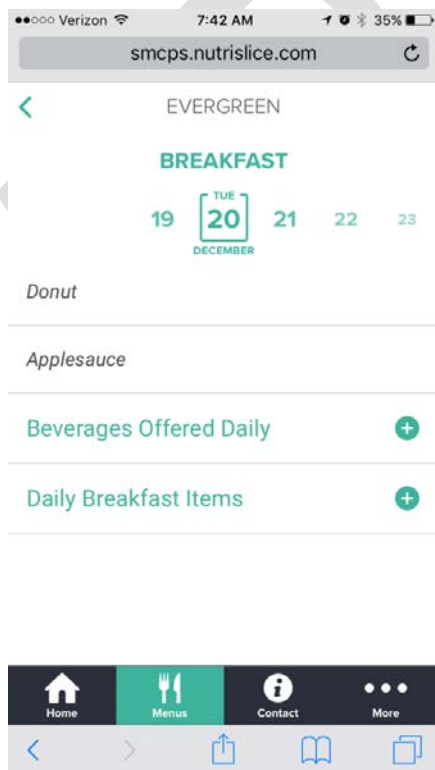
That’s what my girlfriend’s son told me one morning when I asked him what his school serves for breakfast.

Nice.

Nothing like 40-plus grams of sugar to get a kid’s morning started off on the right foot. And we wonder why so many kids suffer from attention deficit disorders and hyperactivity? They’re probably just hopped up on sugar all day. No worries, though; we’ll just throw them on drugs to counter symptoms that most likely could be prevented from the outset simply by feeding our kids healthy food.

The American Heart Association (AHA) recommends that children have no more than 4 teaspoons – 16 grams – of added sugar per day. However, a study conducted by the AHA found that children 4 to 8 years of age consume an average of 21 teaspoons (or 84 grams) of sugar per day. According to the same study, kids 14 to 18 years old consume about 34 *teaspoons* (or 136 *grams*) of added sugar per day. *Adults* should have no more than 25 to 30 grams of added sugar per day, yet we’re cramming sugary processed garbage into our kids’ mouths as fast as they can swallow it.

Here’s a snapshot of the breakfast menu for St. Mary’s County (Maryland) Public Schools for December 20, 2016:



Apparently you’re eating healthy as long as you chase your donuts with applesauce. And the applesauce undoubtedly contains preservatives and added sugar as well. But hey, it’s got the word apple in it so it must be healthy.

It would be easy to blame the schools. How could an institution that’s supposedly dedicated to the education and overall well-being of children possibly provide and encourage the consumption of food that threatens their very health and welfare?

The dietary assault on children is real, and far too often it starts at home.

Why do your children love ranch dressing and ketchup? Because they’re sweet.

(more)

YOU CAN SO DO THIS

If you've made it this far and still want to give THE PROGRAM a shot, good for you! It's normal if you're skeptical or scared. Maybe you've tried a handful of diet programs in the past and nothing seemed to work the way you'd hoped. Or maybe you're just wondering why this is any different than all the rest.

For starters, I don't like the concept of "dieting." Even diet programs that aren't gimmicky often are hard to stick to because they can be very time-consuming, expensive and boring. You often have to find ways to fit yet another new routine into an already busy life. So that means you sometimes give up before you see any meaningful results.

You won't hear me make any claims that this program is easy for everyone. There's no quick fix here. Like anything else worth doing, this is going to take work. It's going to take a little bit of planning and maybe even a little bit of convincing your family to try food they've never had before. I never thought I'd actually crave zucchini or quinoa, but now I love it. So it's possible to convert the skeptical.

The most important thing to keep in mind is this: Don't look at this as "a diet"; you need to look at this as *your diet*.

As in, the sum total and type of food you consume.

As in, this needs to become your new lifestyle.

This is especially critical for any of you looking to shed a few pounds. For all the time you spend poring over ingredients, reading books and blogs and recipes and learning schedules before you even start cooking the food associated with a particular dieting scheme, please note that this accounts for maybe 2% of the success of any program.

At least 98% is mental.

The main reason people usually go on a diet is so they can lose weight for a specific purpose.

"I have to lose 10 pounds for the beach!"

"I need to lose two inches in my waist to fit into my tux."

But even when diets work the results usually don't last. Why? Because once the goal has been met or the photos have been taken, it's generally back to business as usual as you go right back to eating the same stuff that caused you to gain weight in the first place.

I've never been a very big fan of setting goals. If you don't meet them, you just get upset and eventually give up. Instead, just commit to taking a small step every day toward being healthier. Stop drinking sodas. Drink more water. Walk half a mile every other day after work. Start doing push-ups and sit-ups before your shower. Whatever it is. Then try to do a little better tomorrow than you did today. Do one more push-up tomorrow.

This program includes a very manageable workout routine that you can do every night for only 15 to 20 minutes right in your living room. I think you'll be surprised by how much better you'll look and feel once you complement your new eating habits with this modest exercise plan.

If you're not willing to start doing this right now, then it's not going to work. We're not looking for results overnight. *This is your new lifestyle.*

Remember, it's 98% mental. You have to commit. The artist Coolio wrote lyrics every day for 17 years before he had a hit.

Trust me; this isn't as hard as trying to be Coolio.

But if you can decide that you want to look and feel better and *be healthy*, give THE PROGRAM four weeks. You can't cheat during this timeframe, but it's not that big a deal because you're going to be making and eating meals and snacks that are delicious.

This probably sounds like a gimmick but it's not. I'm not trying to sell anything here. I'm giving you all of this information for FREE. I want to help you look and feel better as you free yourself from the chains of Big Food, the corporate food industry that quite literally is killing us.

This will only work if it becomes a lifestyle you desire, and it won't become one unless you start with a solid month of consistency and start seeing weight loss or noticing improvements with your digestion or energy level. And believe me, once this starts to happen you probably won't even want to cheat half the time because you'll start becoming addicted to how great you look and feel.

Or maybe that was just me. But I don't think so.

I'd even bet that many of the recipes will make you feel like you're cheating even though you won't be. Since I'm going to show you how to cook and season food that tastes great, I think you'll be surprised at how easy it will be to start breaking bad habits.

But this isn't going to happen overnight, either. Chances are you're going to want to have some of that office birthday cake or grab a handful of chips at happy hour every now and then. Cheating with food that isn't part of the program isn't necessarily going to be the end of the world, ***but you can't cheat in the first four weeks.***

The reason for this is because you have to establish a baseline for success. Your body is unique to you and you have to know how it's going to respond to your new lifestyle. You might only lose 5 pounds in this timeframe whereas your friend loses 12. But now you know you.

When I miss a day of push-ups I hate myself. This is where you want to be mentally, but you know it's not that big a deal physically because it's only one day, and you'll pick right back up the next. This "cheat" isn't the end of the world because the past X number of months of working your butt off has already been paying off.

So it's no different with food. It takes at least a couple weeks for your weight to get away from you even when you're eating like crap most of the time. So cheating every now and then with processed food (like that "healthy" granola bar from the vending machine) will have no real chance of doing any damage to the waistline because it will evaporate within your new lifestyle of delicious, healthy eating.

However, another reason you need to play by all the rules in the first four weeks is because ***you also need to prove to yourself that you can overcome the urge to quit***. You need to be honest with yourself about whether you're really going to take this seriously or not. If you're going to, great. If not, what do I care? I'm not you and I can't make you care.

But if you *do* care, I'll be here for you every step of the way. I'm going to keep coming up with recipes if you keep using them. You can even call me with questions. 240-298-8862. Ask for Trevor.

Remember, this isn't only about weight loss. This is about being and living healthy. You don't necessarily need to worry about how much you're eating but rather *what* you're eating. As I mentioned earlier, when you give your body the fuel it actually wants – nutritious food it can process and digest easily – it will reward you for it and your weight will take care of itself. The beauty of this is that it will all happen naturally.

I'll end on a personal note. I really started upping my nutrition game the day I was diagnosed with thyroid cancer. I noticed a lump on the right side of my neck when I was 32. It was 2006. I went to my primary care physician, who wrote me an order for an ultrasound.

I was too scared to make the appointment.

Figuring you never get good news when you go to the doctor, I perversely ignored what was happening even though by my own rationale I was convinced I was sick.

Yes, I was an idiot.

My first child was born in 2007. He grew over the years and so did the lump in my neck. In 2010 my second son was born. At this point, despite all my denial, I knew this lump just wasn't going away. By now you could see it in photographs.

One night in December 2010 I was sitting on my couch having a cocktail when a wave of anxiety hit me as I suddenly realized I was more scared to die on my kids than to get the cancer diagnosis I'd always feared. A couple weeks later I had an appointment with an ear, nose and throat doctor, who ended up removing my thyroid along with its malignant tumor during two surgeries over the course of the next few weeks. (Dr. Mike Pardo, good lookin' out. I owe you much more than that bottle of scotch.)

As much as I'm concerned about what I put into my own body, my true inspiration for my lifestyle comes from my kids. Adults can make their own decisions but children can't. I'm appalled by how many people so blithely hand them garbage like chips, gum, ice cream, candy and cookies. Every day and right in front of me, no less, without even bothering to think that I might not consent to it. This alone indicates how mainstream our acceptance of junk food really is.

And then there's soda. My kids' former private school gave its students a can of soda for lunch at least once a month. Granted, gram for gram the sugar in chocolate milk (a lunchroom staple for decades) and fruit juice (soda without the bubbles) generally is even higher than in Coke, but there's just something about encouraging kids to drink carbonated sugar water that seems borderline criminal to me. They're not freaking hummingbirds.

Sorry about the language. I just get a little fired up whenever I think about all the people who are slowly poisoning my children.

So that's how I got here.

It's not always fun standing in a kitchen for two to four hours a day over the weekend cooking breakfast, lunch and dinner or making meals in advance for the coming week. It's hard to come home from a full workday and spend another hour or so whipping up a healthy dinner you hope everyone in your family will want to eat that night. It can be frustrating to create the most delicious scrambled eggs, only to listen to your kids ask if they can pour ketchup over them.

And let's not forget the sneers and ridicule you often have to put up with even from adults in your own family because you care enough about your children to constantly rebuff their requests for Sprite as you hand them water.

You will probably be called a Nazi more times than you care to count.

And you were worried you wouldn't be able to prepare this food yourself? That's pretty much the easy part.

But it's all worth it. Your kids are worth it.

I used to let my kids have Twizzlers once every couple months because, hey, they're kids and they should get a treat every now and then. Right? But then I asked myself, "Would I give my kids a cigarette every now and then?"

I know, I know. You're probably thinking I'm crazy for making that analogy. *Of course* I wouldn't give my kids cigarettes.

But cigarettes are probably safer than sugar. There, I said it.

And the words snack and treat hardly need to be synonymous with junk food. Sliced apples are a snack.

It's time we all wake up and realize we're being scammed. Just take a close look at all the packaged "food" that lines the inner aisles of the grocery store. Entire rows devoted to seemingly infinite assortments of cookies, chips, crackers, candy, flavored yogurt, frozen dinners, ice cream, breakfast cereal and bread.

Now take a closer look and read the ingredients. Almost everything we eat on a daily basis is made of the same thing – the lowest quality, harmful ingredients you can find. A diet high in sugar, artificial

sweeteners, high fructose corn syrup, refined flours, hydrogenated fats, food dyes, preservatives, hormones and antibiotics causes chronic inflammation throughout the body and triggers disease.

Hippocrates, the father of modern medicine, is believed to have said, "All disease begins in the gut." Obviously this doesn't apply to genetic illnesses, but there is evidence to suggest that chronic metabolic diseases do in fact begin in the gut.

Various gut bacteria reside in the digestive tract. According to research, unwanted bacteria called endotoxins can "leak" into our bloodstream. When this happens, our immune system attacks these foreign molecules, resulting in an inflammatory response. Inflammation is complex, but simply put it's the immune system's response to foreign invaders and toxins.

Go back and look at the photo of me from 2010. The bloat ... the fat ... the intermittent acid reflux I haven't mentioned until now that doesn't show up in photos. These are some of the more prominent ways your outer body tells you your inner body is sick and suffering. Embrace it. It's doing you a favor.

If all metabolic disease indeed begins in the gut, isn't it reasonable then to believe that disease *ends* in the gut as well?

There was a time when I couldn't believe how many people I knew were dying in their fifties. But now I'm actually amazed we're even making it that long. The human body is so resilient it can withstand 40 to 50 years of daily abuse before it finally gives out.

Think about that. Now think about how much better off you might be if you simply started feeding it the food it deserves.

I personally know *five* women who ranged in age from early thirties to early fifties when they had double mastectomies due to breast cancer. Another, who happens to be a close friend, was fortunate enough to keep one breast. Four other friends, including my aunt's brother, were in their forties or fifties when sadly they lost their battles with various other forms of cancer over the past five years.

Did all of us get sick because of our respective diets? Who knows? I'm certainly not saying that all illnesses are due to a poor diet or that they all can be prevented if you maintain a healthy one. Even babies inexplicably get cancer. And even healthy fruits and vegetables are sprayed with pesticides.

But I do know that I'm part of Generation X, the first generation in history that was raised from infancy on processed food.

Chain fast food restaurants have been in almost every city in America since I was about three. Combine that with the fact that we've been inundated with processed food in our mainstream grocery stores for the past four decades minimum and, well, do the math. Both of my paternal grandparents, born well before the advent of widespread access to modern medicine, ate almost exclusively out of their own garden and lived into their nineties.

Just sayin'.

We've come a long way from hunting sabre cats and mammoths with spears. **Humans, like other species of animals, are intended to eat out of necessity not pleasure.** It's probably no coincidence that the earliest cave paintings and drawings depicted stick figures. There probably was no such thing as Corpulent Caveman.

It takes little more than looking around your local department stores, schools, coffee shops, restaurants and workplaces to conclude that many of us, regardless of age, certainly find it challenging to maintain a fit and healthy lifestyle.

But I don't believe all is lost.

I think lots of people are coming around to the realization that the food we're putting into our bodies needs to change. Maybe we're starting to understand that our morning smorgasbord of blood pressure and cholesterol pills can't be any way to live.

Or maybe our growing epidemic of obese children with Type 2 diabetes is finally starting to make us think about what we're feeding our kids. After all, it's troubling to say the least that today's children have been forecast to be the first generation that may not live longer than their parents.

This is where THE PROGRAM comes in. If we must eat for pleasure, let's at least eat pleasurable food that is *good for us*.

I'm not good at many things but one thing I do know how to do is cook. I'm excited to begin this journey with you and share some of my expertise because I know how daunting it can be when you have to walk a new path alone. So consider me your wingman.

GETTING STARTED

DRAFT

WATER, BABY

Experts suggest we should drink between 1/2 ounce and 1 ounce of water for every pound we weigh. For me that's anywhere between 90 to 180 ounces per day or about 3 to 6 quarts.

Drinking 6 quarts of water in a day seems excessive to me, unless you're out working in the sun all day. I drink a minimum of 3 quarts, starting with a pint in the morning when I get up. I then fill two 1.5-quart water bottles for work and sip on them at my desk all day, usually finishing the first by lunch. My goal of 3 quarts is met during the day, and by the time I get home from work and have a couple more pints of water with dinner, I've easily exceeded my minimum for the day.

Not only is water a necessity, it has many health benefits. It helps kidney function, fights hangovers and fatigue, and aids digestion. But perhaps one of the best benefits of drinking lots of water is that ***it also helps you lose weight***. Drinking water makes you feel full, so as a result you're going to EAT LESS FOOD in the first place.

All bodies are different. I'm sure there are people who will tell you they don't even eat much during the day but they still can't lose weight. But it comes down to *what* you're eating; you don't need to eat a lot of the wrong food to gain weight or prevent weight loss. Sitting on the couch downing a few glasses of water while you watch your favorite shows is much more waistline-friendly than even nibbling on healthy snacks like our banana breads or granola bars.

Daily Water Consumption Chart

Body Weight	Water (ounces)	Water (quarts)
90 pounds	45	1.4
100 pounds	50	1.6
110 pounds	55	1.7
120 pounds	60	1.9
130 pounds	65	2
140 pounds	70	2.2
150 pounds	75	2.3
160 pounds	80	2.5
170 pounds	85	2.7
180 pounds	90	2.8
190 pounds	95	3
200 pounds	100	3.1
210 pounds	105	3.3
220 pounds	110	3.4
230 pounds	115	3.6
240 pounds	120	3.8
250 pounds	125	3.9

Chart based on consuming one-half ounce of water per pound per day
(multiplying body weight by 0.5)

GET 'EM TO THE GREEK

I love cheese. Not many people don't. But dairy products should be avoided whenever possible. Not only do they contain lactose (milk sugar), which is indigestible by many people and tends to slow weight loss, drinking milk doesn't reduce bone fractures and may actually *increase* the risk, according to the Nurses' Health Study.

If you're going to consume dairy products, it's best to go with fermented dairy like yogurt because of its probiotic benefits. Probiotic yogurt stimulates healthy digestive function, lowers the risk of Type 2 diabetes and boosts the immune system.

However, be aware that all yogurt *is not* created equally! Stay away from flavored yogurts that contain added sugars and purchase only those that contain live and active cultures. If you in the mood for a fruit-flavored treat, add fresh fruit to plain yogurt instead.

I prefer Fage Total or Fage Total 2% greek yogurt. Both are relatively low in sugar, high in protein and creamy and tasty enough to be used as healthier substitutes for processed mayonnaise and sour cream. So this is my go-to brand on the rare occasions I consume dairy. And believe me, it wasn't easy giving up sour cream.

Granted, sour cream is a fermented product but it's generally much higher in unhealthy saturated fat than is greek yogurt. If you're going to consume sour cream, at least eat real (full fat) sour cream and treat yourself; low-fat and fat-free versions contain additives and sometimes even artificial colors to help make these imposters look as close to actual sour cream as possible.

Purchasing a healthy plain yogurt (i.e., not greek) is fine as well, but just be sure you know what you're buying. Unfortunately, yogurt is broadly marketed as a health food in and of itself, but far too often it's nothing more than an unhealthy snack that can contain more sugar than ice cream.

If you choose to eat dairy products, do your best to purchase local, grass-fed raw milk, aged cheeses such as asiago and parmesan, and other fermented dairy products like kefir and buttermilk.

While you'll find lots of literature urging the consumption of dairy products every day, I believe the best rule of thumb is to eat it in moderation, where this is defined as no more than once or twice per week and as a treat. A better option would be to choose milk and cheese from goats or sheep but still only as a treat.

Everything considered, it's probably best to avoid dairy altogether, but at minimum you should cut back drastically if you're consuming dairy products every day. Given that we do need to enjoy ourselves every now and then, you'll find recipes in this book that contain yogurts and cheeses.

Just use your head as you choose your meals, and take note of any positive changes to your body with regard to weight loss and energy level as you begin eliminating dairy products. You just may find that the health benefits of making this choice are even more pleasant than the flavors you're sacrificing.

GROCERY LIST

If you're going to cook, you obviously need food. So I've provided a list of items I routinely buy at the grocery store or farmers market during any given week. **You can easily get started for around \$100 if you want to begin making the recipes today**, and this even includes starting to replace the unhealthy items in your pantry like wheat flour, mayonnaise, prepared spaghetti sauce, pasta noodles and granulated sugar.

Don't use up what you've already purchased before replacing it, either. I've done that myself but don't do it. It's painful to throw money away but it also can be cathartic. Celebrate this transition to a new, healthier lifestyle instead (make healthy margaritas!). Money means nothing if you don't have your health.

Speaking of money, I've heard many people say they can't afford to eat healthy because food such as organic vegetables, grass-fed beef, almond flour and local, farm fresh eggs tends to be more expensive than its poorer quality counterparts. Sure, in many cases this may be true at the micro level.

But what price do you put on your health and well-being? How much money do you spend feeding a family of four at restaurants two or three nights per week? How much will you end up spending down the road on diabetes medication?

How many years are you willing to knock off your kids' lives because it was just easier to go through the drive-thru during the week instead of packing homemade dinners in a cooler for soccer practices?

Sorry. I know that seems harsh. But I'm all about brutal truth. You don't need to like me. I'll be perfectly content knowing you're using my program to live longer lives with your family and friends.

But back to money. Let's talk about value. Have you tasted the difference between a steak from a grass-fed steer and one from a grain-fed steer? Consider the photo below. What do you see?



The New York Strip steak on top is an organic, grass-fed* cut of beef raised with no administered hormones or antibiotics and fed a 100% vegetarian diet. The price isn't visible but it cost me \$11.99 for an 8-ounce portion (nearly \$24 per pound).

The T-Bone steak on the bottom is a nearly 2-pound cut and cost \$13.34 on sale. Adjusting for the weight of the Strip steak, an 8-ounce portion of the T-Bone would cost \$3.39, meaning that the organic Strip steak was almost four times more expensive than the T-Bone.

To most shoppers that's one heck of a deal for the T-Bone! But have you ever wondered why supermarket meat is always bright red? Perhaps it's freshly butchered every day!

Hardly.

Much of the standard supermarket beef that we eat is treated with carbon monoxide (a poisonous gas that is fatal when inhaled) to prevent bacteria growth and help it retain its red color, making it look deceptively fresh when in many cases it is days old by the time you take it home.

Aside from the fact that the industrial livestock community claims that carbon monoxide is harmless when ingested via meat treated with this gas, the point remains that in many cases shoppers are consuming old, artificial products that are being passed off as fresh.

After all, why do you think they can sell it so cheaply in the first place?

So remember, **purchase organic and locally grown or raised produce, eggs, meat, honey and cheese whenever possible**. Yes, they may be more expensive up front *financially*, but the cheaper products could end up costing you more down the road in terms of your health. And they simply just don't taste as good, either. This is where value comes into play.

Furthermore, I suggest limiting the amount of meat you eat in the first place – four to five servings per week, or every other day as a general guide – so it really should be a wash when it comes to your grocery bill. In other words, buying higher priced meats sporadically shouldn't cost much more than buying cheaper products more frequently.

Another great way to eat healthy while watching your wallet is to cultivate your own pesticide-free fruits and veggies by planting a garden. If you have to buy canned or prepared goods, be sure to buy only those that are minimally processed, containing only the ingredient you're looking for (i.e., no added fillers, preservatives or dyes) and having the lowest sugar content of similar products in their category.

In short, **you need to become a label reader** whenever you have to buy packaged goods. Let your kids

* According to AmericanGrassFedBeef.com, grass-fed products tend to be leaner than grain-fed products, meaning that a steak from a grass-fed steer will be lower in fat and calories than a steak from a grain-fed steer. Lean meat has been shown to lower LDL cholesterol levels, and grass-fed meat is also higher in Omega-3 fatty acids, heart-friendly fats that may lower the risk of high blood pressure, heart attacks and cancer. (<https://www.americangrassfedbeef.com/grass-fed-natural-beef.asp>)

participate as well as they begin to raise their own awareness of what they put into their little bodies. If you're anything like me, in no time this will become one of your favorite regular family bonding activities.

I'm not going to specify how much of everything you'll need to buy because all families are different, so I'm listing only the types of food that you'll need in order to prepare most of the recipes found in this program. Certainly **you do not need to buy everything all at once**, and some items will last longer than others. But this is a good example of what you'd find in my shopping cart at any given time. Buying in bulk non-perishable items like seeds and nuts is a good way to save some money too.

Finally, please note that this grocery list does not comprise all the ingredients you'll need for all the recipes; it's simply representative of the type of food I buy on a regular basis. So if you want to make a particular recipe, just be sure you know which ingredients you need prior to heading to the market.

DRAFT

In My Shopping Cart

Vegetables	Fruits
Lettuce (Romaine, field greens) Spinach Kale Carrots Zucchini/Yellow squash Onions/Garlic Bell peppers (assorted colors, to taste) Cilantro Parsley Cucumber Broccoli/Cauliflower Spaghetti squash/Butternut squash	Avocado Strawberries Pineapple Apples Bananas Pears Tomatoes Plantains
Seeds & Nuts	Meat
Flax seed (I prefer ground, cold milled) Chia seed Pistachios Almonds Sunflower seeds	Chicken Pork Ground turkey Salmon (wild, NOT farmed) Skirt steak/Ground bison meat (ONLY grass-fed) Bacon (I prefer Applegate Farms)
Oils	Baking Goods
Coconut oil Olive oil Butter (ONLY grass-fed; I prefer Kerrygold)	Coconut flour Almond flour Tapioca flour Coconut milk/Almond milk Sprouted wheat flour Organic cane sugar/Coconut sugar
Miscellaneous*	
Goat cheese/Aged cheeses (parmesan, asiago) Eggs (local whenever possible) Greek yogurt (I prefer Fage Total 2%) Dark chocolate chips Granola (sugar added only with natural fruit) Dijon mustard	Sea salt/Kosher salt Spices such as black pepper, cumin & oregano Organic honey (raw, local whenever possible) Peanut/Almond butter (natural, low/no sugar) Rolled oats/Quick oats Vinegars (balsamic, white wine, rice, apple cider)

* These items appear here because I buy them sporadically (like granola, chocolate chips and yogurt), they don't quite fit in the other categories or because they just don't have a proper category in the first place. For instance, eggs are generally understood to be a dairy product, but they're not. Some people think they're meat but that's not really accurate, either. They're basically an animal by-product. And they're delicious and good for you so I eat them a lot.

MY ROUTINE

On page xx you will find the Meal Tracker, which you can use to keep track of the food you eat every day for breakfast, lunch and dinner. The beauty of this program is that you'll be eating the same meals whether you're seeking to lose weight or simply looking to improve your nutrition and start feeling healthier.

The meal tracker allows you to maintain an inventory of what types of food you're eating and when, so you can print clean copies each month and eventually establish a comprehensive illustration over time of what's working, what's not and why. For instance, if you stray from this diet for a set period of time – say, over a girls' weekend or a week at the beach – how does this impact your weight, if at all? That sort of thing.

So since you'll now be paying more attention to what you're eating, I figured it's probably a good idea for me to let you know what my daily routine normally entails. This is what a typical workday looks like. On weekends, I'll take the time to make omelets or banana pancakes for breakfast.

6:00 AM: Wake up, take thyroid medication with 1 pint of water.

6:15 AM: Drink 1 cup of coffee with 1/2 teaspoon organic cane sugar and 2 tablespoons no-sugar-added coconut/almond milk (Sometimes I'll drink 2 cups on Saturday and Sunday.)

6:30 AM: Get ready for work

7:00 AM: Prepare/drink 1 green smoothie, eat 2 eggs and/or 1 banana (or 1 slice of banana bread, which I'll make every few weeks), grab lunch for the day from fridge, fill 2 (1.5-quart) water bottles to drink during the day, drive to work

8:00-10:30 AM: Snack on 1 cup assorted tree nuts (cashews, pistachios, almonds), drink 1.5 quarts water

11:00 AM: Eat lunch from menu (usually leftovers from dinner the night before)

12:00-4:00 PM: Drink 1.5 quarts water, finish eating tree nuts if not finished during the morning

5:00-6:30 PM: Prepare/eat dinner (I generally alternate between categories A and B each day.), drink 1-2 pints water with dinner

7:00 PM: Snack on sliced apples with peanut/almond butter, a banana, almond butter energy bites, pickles or banana bread

7:30 PM: Drink 1-2 cocktails (every other night on average)

9:00 PM: Go to bed, watch TV, fall asleep by 10:00 PM

My schedule often varies as I plan around my kids' soccer practices or trips to the grocery store every few days on my way home from work, but this is the general idea.

It's not uncommon to eat at 7 or 8 o'clock at night during the summer when there's more daylight and practices run longer or the kids are playing outside, but we all deal with family events. That's why it's all the more important to plan ahead, especially for dinner, in order to avoid the urge to order a pizza three nights a week.

There's a big reason I stick to a routine when I eat. Whether it's making a green smoothie every morning, drinking water religiously or eating the same type of snacks every day at work, **I believe one important strategy to maintaining a healthy diet is eating redundantly.** That is, you need to get in the *habit* of eating the same type of ingredients and meals over and over. This comes in handy especially while you're training yourself how to eat because it simplifies meal preparation while you're figuring out what types of ingredients you prefer most.

Think about our normal routines in life. We get out of bed, grab a coffee, go to the bathroom, shower, go to work. Whatever it is. Rinse, repeat. Our very lives often are the epitome of redundancy, so why should it be any different with the food we eat?

The key to accomplishing this without getting sick of this new lifestyle is to stick to a strict menu of healthy ingredients while simultaneously shaking up the meals enough that it doesn't feel like you're eating the same thing every day. After all, we'd even get sick of our favorite ice cream if we had to eat it five times a day, every day.

The trickiest part about writing this book was creating meal recipes that resulted in a wide variety of flavors despite containing the same types of ingredients. Even I would hate spiral zucchini topped with a fried egg if I had to eat it every night for dinner. However, I've found that merely changing up the vinaigrette and components of a salad can be enough to make it feel like I'm eating a different type of meal from one day to the next even though it's still a salad on my plate each time.

But that's just the most simplistic example. I think you'll find that this book is filled with such a wide array of delicious recipes that you won't even feel like the primary emphasis was placed on their healthiness in the first place.

JUST THE TIPS

T-Rev's Quick Tips for a Healthy Lifestyle

Some of these tips are redundant because I mention them in other sections of the book, but sometimes it's nice to consult a handy list instead of having to scour through pages of text to find information. With that, here are some tips to live by if you're looking to live a healthy lifestyle or inspire loved ones to do the same.

1. **Your body can't burn added sugars and other garbage carbohydrates as a primary energy source if you don't feed them to it.** You can't eat processed foods if they're not in your house. You have to buy junk food in order to eat it. Don't buy it.
2. **Give up sodas if you drink them today.** This is a very good way to start adhering to Tip #1 and the reasons why you should abandon sodas are self-evident to most people. But just for the sake of saying it, you'll be like a dog chasing its own tail if you're hoping to reap the benefits of cutting out sugar while you're constantly putting it into your body in the simplest manner possible. And this includes switching from Coke to water in your whiskey.
3. **Stop drinking beer.** I know, I know. I said there were no alcohol restrictions in this program but you can't be stupid, either. Drinking beer unnecessarily adds tons of garbage carbs to your diet, so it's much wiser to trade in your big glass mug for a glass of wine or a rocks glass of your favorite spirit. If you do drink beer, be sure to limit it to only one or two servings and partake *only* as a treat every now and then.
4. **Limit fruits higher in sugar if your immediate goals include significant weight loss.** If you're hoping to shed 20 pounds up front take it easy for a few months on fruits higher in natural sugar. These include pineapples, pears, grapes, cherries, apples, bananas and mangos. Focus instead on avocados, cranberries, blackberries, raspberries and strawberries. I put bananas and apples in smoothies every morning and a combo of pineapple, pears and apples on salads at least once or twice a week when my family started THE PROGRAM, and our weight loss ranged from 10 to 20 percent of our beginning weight over the course of about four months. If I was stricter about the type of fruit we ate, maybe we would've seen the same results in less time. However, losing weight slower or faster is one thing; it's pretty unlikely you'll ever gain weight eating any type of fruit as long as you're not eating added sugars and garbage carbs along with them.
5. **Never order another pizza again.** If you prefer, once a month you'll be able to make traditional (white/whole wheat flour crust) pizzas at home with the entire family and have fun while being healthier. You can make the dough using the recipes on [p. xxx](#), and the pizza sauce recipe ([p. xxx](#)) will probably make you think you should open your own pizza shop. And you can make

almond flour crust pizzas (**CATEGORY B**) essentially any time you want. These healthy pizzas taste so good you actually may not care if you never ordered a fast food pizza again. Seriously, not kidding.

6. **Stop eating out at restaurants.** Eating food that isn't homemade is the antithesis of this entire program and lifestyle, and where I live we're relegated to corporate big box restaurants that serve primarily processed garbage that doesn't even taste that good anyway. If you must eat out, be sure to make good choices. *Even fast food restaurants serve salads.* Stave off the junk until you're able to get home and eat something that's probably going to taste much better anyhow.
7. **Make a breakfast smoothie a daily event.** Learn to love it. The infusion of goodness from fresh greens and fruit provides immediate benefits from vitamins and minerals, and in my experience this was the key to kick-starting improved digestion (i.e., better poops!). The recipes are all pretty awesome and they can be whipped up in about 5 minutes.
8. **Hard-boiling a dozen eggs on a lazy Sunday afternoon is a great way to ensure you'll have breakfast covered easily and quickly for the week.** A couple eggs and a banana in addition to my smoothie is usually enough to get me to lunch by itself, but combining them with a handful of tree nuts often is enough to guarantee I won't even need a very big lunch.
9. **Snack on tree nuts during the day.** Most tree nuts are superfoods that help to satiate you because of their generally high protein, vitamin, mineral and fiber content, so when it's time for your meals you won't even feel the need to eat as much as you normally would (eliminating any potential for overeating). They're the perfect addition to any diet, including vegan and vegetarian, and sometimes you only need a few to feel full.
10. **Drink lots of water.** Buy two water bottles that are about 1.5 quarts each, refill them every morning and drink them during the day as you snack on nuts and veggies. Salt from nuts such as cashews or pistachios will make you want to drink the water if this is something you don't generally find appealing. I'm a water person but I know some people aren't. Staying hydrated by keeping your stomach filled with water also is a great way to stave off food cravings because this helps keep you feeling full.
11. **Do not drink dairy milk as a beverage.** Repeat this to yourself at least three times per day. Give up dairy milk altogether if possible and for the love of all that is holy DO NOT drink it as you would a glass of water with a meal. It's full of saturated fat and sugar, and claims that it promotes bone strength largely are mythical (some studies claim it actually reduces it). Other studies even suggest that milk and dairy products increase the risk of certain types of cancer. In short, humans are not meant to breastfeed from mama cows. Cow's milk, filled with all sorts of natural growth hormones intended to turn calves into full grown cows as quickly as possible, doesn't really belong in any human diet. Staying away from dairy milk also inherently prevents

you from pouring it into a bowl of cereal, which from a nutritional perspective might as well be a bowl of cookies as far as your body is concerned. If you do consume dairy products, which some of the recipes in THE PROGRAM include, stick to fermented goods like kefir, greek yogurt and bleu cheese.

12. **If you eat cheese, be sure to limit it only to a small portion of your meal such as a shaved topping for a salad and use it only as a treat** (maybe once or twice per week). Stick to aged and/or fermented varieties such as feta, bleu, goat cheese, parmesan and asiago and choose products from goats and sheep over dairy when possible. From a body weight perspective, the reason cheese makes people fat is because it's naturally high in unhealthy saturated fat and, because it's delicious, people carve up half a pound at a time and throw it on a plate – usually with processed crackers – and eat it as an appetizer before a full meal full of who knows how many additional grams of fat and sugar.
13. **Limit your intake of homemade sweet treats.** Prepare the sweeter treats in the book, such as the granola bars and brownies, no more than once every couple weeks and make them to share. This will ensure you'll only eat one or two yourself from the batch each week. I follow the same rule with the banana and pumpkin breads even though it's probably unnecessary, but just make sure you're not making them part of a daily routine. Don't fall into the mindset of thinking you can eat healthy treats five times per day because "they're good for me." Overeating even healthy treats that contain added sugar is counterproductive and almost certainly worse than eating a processed snack just every now and then. Adults should consume no more than 30 grams of added sugar per day and I try to stay under that. There's no calorie counting in THE PROGRAM, but if there's anything you should count, it's your daily grams of sugar. There are plenty of snacks and treats in the book – homemade pickles, plantain chips, salsa and guacamole, for example – that have little if any added sugar that should in conjunction with one another be more a part of a daily routine.
14. Filler
15. Filler
16. Filler
17. **Make condiments in advance and keep them on hand in the fridge.** Having readily-available jars of homemade tzatziki sauce, pizza sauce, pico de gallo, ketchup and barbeque sauce makes for very convenient meal preparation. If you're suddenly in the mood for a pizza omelet, obviously it's much easier to whisk up some eggs and grab a heaping tablespoon of prepared sauce than it is to have to spend an hour or two roasting tomatoes before you eat. In short, keeping these homemade condiments on hand eliminates the urge to run to the store to buy their processed equivalents. Oh, and I *always* have no less than four frozen bananas on hand in

the freezer at any time. You never know when the urge for a homemade piña colada or bowl of ice cream will strike.

18. **Learn to love your cooler.** Get in the habit of taking food on the road whenever you know you're going to be away from home. Sure, maybe you'll look like the "weirdo" in the crowd as you pull out baggies of precooked chicken, pickles, nuts, apples, bananas and oranges for dinner during your kid's baseball practice. But you'll also probably look skinnier than the family shoveling down fast food nuggets or pizza. Have fun with it. There are much worse things in life than turning a family dinner into a picnic or tailgate.
19. **Throw away all your clothes that suddenly begin to look way too big on you.** Don't keep them in the closet "just in case" you put weight back on. If you keep them, you probably *will* put the weight back on. Stay strong. Weakness is less sexy than fat is. Even men are excited to buy new clothes when they realize they need smaller sizes because they're starting to look better; it's painful and pretty much a double-whammy when you have to spend money because you got fatter. You need to understand and appreciate the fact that you don't need or want that pain. Toss the "fat pants" and don't look back. This is your new lifestyle.
20. **Don't adopt this lifestyle to lose weight. DO IT TO BE HEALTHY.** Do it so you can live long enough to play with your grandkids and help smash the notion that grandparents should spoil their grandchildren constantly with junk food. Do it to model for your kids the importance of being and staying healthy so you can help create a new generation of people that doesn't grow up thinking it's okay to slowly poison their family members in the first place.

MEAL TRACKER

Weigh yourself on Monday Week 1 and record the result. Enter the **letter** of the food category (**A, B** or **C**) in which you choose your DINNER meal each day. If you don't eat from one of the dinner categories, record an **X** in the box for that day.

For BREAKFAST and LUNCH, simply record **Y** or **N** to indicate whether you did (Y) or did not (N) choose an item from the breakfast or lunch menu. Repeat the process each week, weighing yourself on the weekend and recording the result.

BEGINNING WEIGHT: _____ LBS

WEEK 1

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
BREAKFAST							
LUNCH							
DINNER							
WEIGHT							LBS

WEEK 2

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
BREAKFAST							
LUNCH							
DINNER							
WEIGHT							LBS

WEEK 3

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
BREAKFAST							
LUNCH							
DINNER							
WEIGHT							LBS

WEEK 4

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
BREAKFAST							
LUNCH							
DINNER							
WEIGHT							LBS

BREAKFAST

DRAFT

GREEN SMOOTHIES

Green smoothies made with leafy green veggies like kale, spinach and collard greens are an efficient and effective way to get essential vitamins and minerals every day.

Kale is a very good source of vitamin A, vitamin K, vitamin C, vitamin B6, manganese, calcium, copper and potassium. This nutrient-dense superfood can help lower cholesterol and is thought to have protective effects against cancer due to a compound called sulforaphane.

Spinach is an excellent source of vitamin K, vitamin A, vitamin B2, vitamin B6, vitamin E, vitamin C, manganese, folate, magnesium, iron, copper, calcium and potassium. This superfood also is a very good source of dietary fiber, phosphorus, vitamin B1, zinc, protein and choline.

What does all of this boil down to? Starting your day off with a green smoothie is a great (and deliciously easy!) way to increase consumption of vital fruits and vegetables (particularly greens), antioxidants and dietary fiber (of which adults should consume a minimum of 30 grams per day). Green smoothies have anti-inflammatory properties so they are easily digestible which means quick assimilation of nutrients by the body.

Make a green smoothie part of your daily diet and enjoy many natural health benefits including natural weight loss, increased energy, mental clarity and focus, and clearer skin.

You can use kale or spinach (or collard greens) interchangeably in any recipe. These recipes are what I tend to prepare, but experiment to find flavors you enjoy most.

Full disclosure: Personally, I'm not a huge fan of the taste of kale, whether raw or cooked. Sometimes its flavor overpowers the fruit flavors a bit depending on how much I use, so I usually just stand at the kitchen counter and chug my smoothie every morning. All of the smoothies in this program taste great, but admittedly I drink them for their nutritional value over and above anything else. As I tell my kids, ***food doesn't always have to be fun***. It's a shame we essentially condition children to think food should be a party in their mouth by giving them artificially flavored processed garbage as soon as they're old enough to chew sugary baby puff treats.

A couple final notes: As chia seeds soak in liquid they will begin to expand and turn to gel, which will in turn cause the smoothie to thicken. Just keep this in mind whenever you choose chia seeds because the longer the smoothie sits, the thicker it will get. So drink it quickly or add extra water to keep it thinner longer if a thick drink is unpleasant.

Also, the recipes outline blending the ingredients in stages. However, if you have a powerful blender (such as a Waring or Blendtec) or one designed specifically for smoothies, you'll probably be able to add all the ingredients at once. Start by adding greens and liquids, then layer fruit followed by ice and blast away.

Kale, Apple & Banana Smoothie

2 cups fresh kale
1/2 cup coconut milk
1 cup water (adjust as necessary)
1 apple, quartered and chopped
1 banana
1-2 cups ice
2-4 tablespoons flax or chia seed

Instructions

1. Add coconut milk, water and kale to blender and blend until smooth.
2. Slowly add fruit until mixture is smooth, adding more water if necessary.
3. Add flax or chia seeds and ice, and blend until smooth.

Servings: 2-4 (makes about 2 pints)

Kale, Avocado & Banana Smoothie

2 cups fresh kale
1/2 cup coconut milk
1 cup water (adjust as necessary)
1 large Haas avocado, peeled and quartered
1 banana
Juice of 1/2 lemon (optional)
1-2 cups ice
2-4 tablespoons flax or chia seed

Instructions

1. Add coconut milk, water and kale to blender and blend until smooth.
2. Slowly add avocado, banana and lemon juice until mixture is smooth, adding more water if necessary.
3. Add flax or chia seeds and ice, and blend until smooth.

Servings: 2-4 (makes about 2 pints)

Spinach, Avocado & Pineapple Smoothie

2 cups fresh spinach
1/2 cup coconut milk
1 cup water (adjust as necessary)
1 large Haas avocado, peeled and quartered
1 cup pineapple, cubed
1-2 cups ice
2-4 tablespoons flax or chia seed

Instructions

1. Add coconut milk, water and spinach to blender and blend until smooth.
2. Slowly add avocado and pineapple until mixture is smooth, adding more water if necessary.
3. Add flax or chia seeds and ice, and blend until smooth.

Servings: 2-4 (makes about 2 pints)

Piña Colada Smoothie

2 cups spinach or kale
1/2 cup coconut milk
1/2 cup water (adjust as necessary)
2½ cups fresh pineapple, cubed
2 tablespoons organic unsweetened flake coconut
2-4 tablespoons flax seed
2 cups ice

Instructions

1. Add greens, coconut milk and water to blender and blend until smooth.
2. Add pineapple, flake coconut and flax seed and blend until smooth.
3. Add ice and blend until smooth.

Servings: 2-4 (makes about 2 pints)

Blueberry Banana Smoothie (Coconut-Free)

This is a smoothie the kids will love and it doesn't contain coconut, so all is not lost in the smoothie world if anyone in the family suffers from a coconut allergy.

2 cups spinach or kale
2 cups water
1 banana
1 apple, quartered and chopped
1/2 cup blueberries
2-4 tablespoons flaxseed
2 cups ice

Instructions

1. Add greens and water to blender and blend until smooth.
2. Add banana, apple and flax seed and blend until smooth.
3. Add ice and blend until smooth.

Servings: 2-4 (makes about 2 pints)

Strawberry, Blueberry & Banana Smoothie

Okay, well this smoothie isn't exactly green. But it starts with greens and is delicious as well as nutritious. Check out its alcohol-infused counterpart in the **COCKTAILS** section when you're in the mood for Sunday brunch.

2 cups fresh spinach or kale
1/2 cup coconut milk
1/2 cup water (adjust as necessary)
2 cups strawberries
1 cup blueberries
1 banana
2-4 tablespoons flaxseed
2 cups ice

Instructions

1. Add coconut milk, water and greens to blender and blend until smooth.
2. Slowly add the fruit until mixture is smooth, adding more water if necessary.

Servings: 2-4 (makes about 2 pints)



DRAFT

ON-THE-RUN IDEAS

Smoothies are quick and easy to prepare, but sometimes you just don't even have 10 minutes to whip up a healthy breakfast. Prepare in advance for the days you know you'll really be on the run in the morning and spare yourself the urge to grab fast food, a bowl of cereal or processed granola bars.

Nutritionally, you might as well be eating cookies for breakfast if you're living on cereal and granola bars. Processed granola bars often are little more than candy bars marketed with healthier-looking shapes and wrappers. To satisfy cravings for these crunchy snacks, whip up a delicious batch of healthy Sweet and Nutty Granola Bars (p. xxx), but only as a treat every now and then.

Hard-Boiled Eggs

Sunday afternoons are one of my favorite times to boil a dozen eggs for the week that can be grabbed easily as you're running out the door.

Fresh Fruit & Nuts

There's really nothing simpler than keeping a bunch of bananas and a bag of almonds, cashews or pistachios at your desk at work. You can also portion out baggies of seeds and nuts over the weekend to grab each morning.

Turkey Apple Meatballs

This simple recipe is a great way to ensure you'll always have a quick burst of protein available as you head to the office. Enjoy cold or reheated.

- 1 pound ground turkey
- 1 egg, beaten
- 2 tablespoons minced Italian parsley (about 1 cup unpacked, include stems)
- 1/2 cup unsweetened applesauce
- 1/4 cup almond flour
- 1/4 cup ground flax seed
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme leaves
- 1/2 teaspoon dried, crushed rosemary

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Add all ingredients to a large mixing bowl and mix by hand until thoroughly combined.
3. Form mixture into golf ball-size meatballs and place on a rimmed baking sheet lined with a silicone mat or parchment paper or greased with a thin layer of extra virgin olive oil.
4. Place meatballs in oven to bake for 25-30 minutes or until turkey is fully cooked (160°F).
5. Remove meatballs from oven and rest for 10 minutes. Refrigerate until ready to eat.

Note:

1. In the case of a tree nut allergy, you can replace almond flour with oat flour or finely ground panko bread crumbs.
2. Using silicone sheet pan liners or parchment paper generally eliminates the need to use oils to grease baking sheets whenever you need a nonstick surface.



Southwest Breakfast Tacos

The delectability of this savory delight is overshadowed only by its simplicity. This taco is so good you'll swear there's no way it can be good for you. But it is.

Seriously, go buy a fast food breakfast wrap just once and take a bite after eating this and tell me you'll ever care to eat out again.

Taco Shells

- 1/2 cup almond flour
- 1/2 cup tapioca flour
- 1 cup full fat coconut milk, more if necessary
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 pinch sea salt
- Extra virgin coconut or olive oil, to cook

Yield: 5-7 soft taco shells depending on size

Breakfast Tacos

- 2 taco shells
- 2 large eggs
- Extra virgin olive oil or grass-fed butter, to cook
- Sea salt, to taste
- 1 large Haas avocado
- 1 plum tomato
- Sea salt, to taste
- Ground black pepper, to taste
- Cilantro leaves, to taste

Instructions

1. Preheat a medium size nonstick skillet or griddle to medium heat.
2. Mix taco shell ingredients together in a medium size bowl until fully combined. Add 1 teaspoon coconut or olive oil to skillet. Using a ladle or small measuring cup, pour batter into skillet to make 5- to 6-inch rounds one at a time. Cook 2 minutes on first side then flip and cook an additional 1-2 minutes. Remove and set aside to cool on a baking rack, repeating until batter is gone. (Use about 2 tablespoons oil to cover a griddle surface if making multiple shells at once, repeating for each batch.)
3. Dice plum tomato and season to taste with salt and pepper. Set aside in a bowl or on a cutting board.
4. Peel avocado and separate into halves. Slice each half into strips and set aside (1/2 avocado per taco).

5. Preheat a small nonstick skillet to medium heat. Add 1 teaspoon of oil or butter to skillet and crack egg into pan. Fry until opaque and flip with plastic spatula or by tossing egg in the skillet by hand, taking care not to break yolk (if necessary, use a rubber spatula to keep egg from sticking). Season with salt to taste.
6. Place 1 taco shell on a plate and transfer egg to shell. Add strips of 1/2 avocado atop fried egg and top the egg with half of the diced tomatoes. Garnish with cilantro leaves to taste.
7. Repeat steps to make a second taco.
8. Fold in half to eat, but you may end up needing a fork!

Yield: 2 tacos



Banana Pancakes

These scrumptious “bancakes” deserve to be eaten based on their flavor alone, but it’s all the more impressive that they taste this great for being healthy too.

I certainly do not advocate starting every single day with maple syrup (sugar), so it’s probably best to make these for breakfast no more than a couple times per week. In this case it actually pays off not to have much time to prepare breakfast during the week because it will naturally limit the number of times you’ll start your day with sugar. So this is a great recipe for weekends. And in my particular case a great way to get my older son to eat eggs!

3 very ripe bananas
4 eggs, beaten
1/4 teaspoon baking powder
1 pinch sea salt
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
Extra virgin coconut or olive oil, to cook
Grass-fed butter, to serve
Pure organic maple syrup, to serve

Instructions

1. Preheat nonstick skillet to medium-low heat.
2. Mash bananas in a mixing bowl and whisk eggs, baking powder, salt and cinnamon separately in a separate bowl. Add banana to egg mixture and stir gently to combine.
3. Add 1 tablespoon oil to a nonstick pan. Use a 1/4 cup size measuring cup or a 2-ounce ladle to scoop pancake mixture and add to pan, two at a time, about 3 to 4 inches in diameter. (Increase oil proportionally if using a griddle.)
4. Cook 2 minutes or until edges are firm, then flip and cook 1 to 2 minutes longer. Ensure heat doesn’t get too high; turn down if necessary so pancakes don’t burn. Ensure eggs are fully cooked.
5. Serve with a dollop of grass-fed butter and/or organic pure maple syrup or fresh fruit.

Yield: 10-12 pancakes



Coconut Flour Pancakes

You probably won't care if you never eat another white flour pancake again once you have these. Increase the recipe proportionally as desired.

Applesauce

- 2 apples of choice, cored (I prefer Gala, Red Delicious or Honey Crisp)
- 2 tablespoons water, adjust for consistency
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

Pancake Batter

- 3 large eggs
- 2 tablespoons unsweetened applesauce
- 1 tablespoon melted grass-fed butter
- 1/2 cup full fat coconut milk, adjust to desired consistency
- 1/4 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
- 3 tablespoons coconut flour
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 pinch sea salt
- Extra virgin coconut or olive oil, to cook

Instructions

1. Cut apples around core into quarters and add to blender along with water. Blend on high speed until apples are pureed. Add more water if necessary to assist with blending.
2. Transfer applesauce to small bowl, stir in cinnamon and set aside. Reserve 2 tablespoons for pancake batter mixture. (Overall yield 1-1¼ cups)
3. Whisk eggs in a large bowl and add applesauce, butter, coconut milk and vinegar. Whisk until smooth.
4. In a separate bowl combine coconut flour, cinnamon, baking powder and salt. Whisk into egg mixture until smooth.
5. Set a skillet or griddle to medium heat.
6. Add 1 tablespoon oil to skillet or enough to lightly cover griddle top. Using a small measuring cup or ladle, add batter cooking surface to for pancakes about 5" in diameter.
7. Cook 2 minutes first side, then flip with a spatula and cook another 1-2 minutes. Keep an eye on heat so pancakes don't burn, adjusting heat as necessary. Transfer pancakes to plate lined with parchment paper as they finish cooking, repeating process until batter is gone.
8. Serve pancakes topped with applesauce.

Yield: 7-9 pancakes

Spinach Bacon Omelet

This omelet is a classic that might even get your pickiest eaters to try spinach. You can substitute Canadian bacon if you like, and if you don't have bacon on hand, frying up some uncured Applegate Farms deli ham will do the trick too.

1-2 slices uncured bacon (I prefer Applegate Farms)
1/4 small red onion, diced
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil
1 cup unpacked baby spinach
1 pinch sea salt
1 pinch ground black pepper
2 eggs
2 tablespoons full fat coconut milk or water
1 pinch sea salt
1/2 tablespoon grass-fed butter (I prefer Kerrygold)
1 ounce goat cheese or 1/2 ounce freshly grated parmesan cheese

Instructions

1. Fry bacon in skillet and set aside.
2. Set a small saucepan or skillet to medium-low heat and olive oil, onions and garlic. Stir occasionally and cook until onions soften, taking care not to burn garlic. Add spinach and stir until wilted, about 1 minute. Remove from heat and set aside.
3. Add eggs, coconut milk (or water) and salt to a small glass bowl. Beat vigorously with a fork or whisk until eggs are frothy.
4. Bring a small nonstick skillet (6 inches is ideal) to medium-low heat and add butter. Swirl pan to coat surface evenly with melted butter and add egg mixture. Slowly swirl eggs to coat pan, tilting pan while swirling to bring egg mixture up the sides slightly (just below the handle rivets).
5. Add bacon and veggie mixture once egg begins to set and top with cheese. Using a plastic or rubber spatula, carefully fold omelet in half to form a half-moon.
6. Serve with a side of home fries (p. xxx) and/or fresh fruit.

Yield: 1 omelet



Ham & Cheese Omelet

(coming soon)



Greek Omelet

(coming soon)



Pizza Omelet

(coming soon)



Chicken Parmigiana Omelet

(coming soon)



Steak & Cheese Omelet

(coming soon)



Buffalo Chicken Omelet

(coming soon)



DRAFT

Southwest Omelet

(coming soon)



DRAFT

Mexican Omelet

(coming soon)

This recipe uses Guacamole Salad (p. xxx) as its filling, so breakfast will be easy the morning after you make the salad for dinner if you happen to have leftovers. Pico de Gallo (p. xxx) also works very well in place of the guacamole salad if you're in the mood for Mexican but don't prefer the avocado.



Bruschetta Omelet

(coming soon)



Fried Eggs with Avocado Home Fries

(coming soon)



LUNCH

DRAFT

Salsa-Stuffed Avocado

Whip up a batch of pico de gallo and buy a few ripe avocados and you'll have this easy-to-prepare lunch at the ready for at least half a week.

Pico de Gallo

- 3 fresh, ripe on-the-vine or plum tomatoes, diced
- 3 cloves fresh garlic, minced
- 1/2 small red onion, small dice
- 1 small jalapeno, small dice (optional)
- 1 cup fresh unpacked cilantro, minced (about 2 tablespoons after mincing)
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- Juice of 1/2 lime
- Sea salt, to taste
- Ground black pepper, to taste

Instructions

1. For pico de gallo, slice tomatoes in half lengthwise and squeeze by hand seeds and any easily removable pulp into trash can prior to dicing.
2. Add diced tomatoes and remaining ingredients to a medium size bowl and stir with a spoon until fully combined. Refrigerate at least 1 hour prior to serving.
3. Slice avocado lengthwise and remove pit. Scoop salsa into reservoirs. Serve with parsley or cilantro or just mash it all together in a bowl if you don't care about being fancy.

Yield: 1-1½ cups, or enough for 4 avocados



Leftover Dinner Salads

Boom.

Seriously, this lunch takes about 72 seconds to prepare. Just toss the salad into a container with a snap top lid and refrigerate up to 3 days. I like to put the vinaigrette in a 4-ounce mini container and put it right in with the salad.

The biggest problem you'll have is trying not to feel too sorry for all your coworkers who have fast food salads when yours is healthier and better tasting. Even if you did forget to add the goat cheese like I did the day I took this photo!

Note:

Don't think you have to relegate yourself to leftover salads for lunch. Pick any salad from the dinner recipes and portion as desired into single-serving containers for the week. Just be sure not to add the vinaigrette until lunch time; you don't want to make the salad soggy before you eat it.

As noted above, the salads should stay fresh up to 3 days in the fridge.



Peanut Butter Apple Sandwich

This is a quick, easy and healthy sandwich option for lunch and one that your kids especially will love. Slice the apple for the little ones and let them build them by themselves.

- 1 large apple of choice (I prefer Gala or Honey Crisp)
- 4 tablespoons natural, low/no sugar peanut butter (substitute almond butter)
- 1 teaspoon chia seeds
- 2 tablespoons granola
- 4 teaspoons miniature dark chocolate chips

Instructions

1. Wash apple and slice widthwise into 4 rings between 1/4- and 1/2-inch wide. Remove core using knife or small cookie cutter.
2. Spread 2 tablespoons peanut butter on one of the apple rings and sprinkle with half of the chia seeds, granola and chocolate chips.
3. Cover with bare apple ring to make a sandwich.
4. Repeat steps for a second sandwich.

Yield: 2 sandwiches



Brown Bag It

Or plastic, whatever.

It doesn't get a heckuva lot easier than tossing some fruit, nuts or even deli meat into a bag.



Note:

If I eat deli meat, I prefer Applegate Farms brand as it comes from humanely-raised animals and is free of nitrates and nitrites.

However, a much better alternative to processed meats is making your own "deli meat" at home. Roast a chicken, turkey or grass-fed cut of beef (such as rib roast or eye round) and slice it thinly after resting.

Tuna Salad Lettuce Wraps

This recipe makes enough tuna salad for at least four servings, or enough for you and a friend or spouse to eat lunch for two days of the week.

Tuna Salad

- 4 (5 ounce) cans albacore tuna, drained and shredded
- 1 medium red or yellow onion
- 2 large stalks celery, chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon celery seed
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 2 teaspoons sea salt
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/4 cup sweet relish (substitute 2 teaspoons organic cane sugar)
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 1/4 cups greek yogurt (I prefer Fage 2%)

Instructions

1. Combine all ingredients in a large mixing bowl until thoroughly incorporated.
2. Scoop tuna salad onto individual romaine lettuce leaves that have been washed and dried. Top with diced tomato and/or shaved parmesan cheese if desired.

Note:

As an alternative to a lettuce wrap, you can also use homemade Taco Shells (p. xxx) and wrap tuna salad with shredded lettuce, diced tomato and/or shaved parmesan cheese.

Peanut Butter & Banana Sandwich

This is a perfect recipe for your kid's lunch box or a healthy snack for all ages.

- 4 slices Almond Flour Sandwich Bread (recipe on [p. xxx](#)), toasted if desired
- 1 small banana, sliced widthwise into thin discs
- 4 tablespoons natural peanut butter (substitute almond butter)

Instructions

1. Lay bread slices next to one another and spread 1 tablespoon peanut butter on each.
2. Add banana slices as desired to 2 slices and lay buttered slices on each to make sandwiches.

Yield: 2 sandwiches



DINNER

DRAFT

CATEGORY

A

(daily meals)

Spaghetti Squash with Avocado Alfredo Sauce

Avocado Alfredo Sauce

- 1 cup coconut milk
- 1 large Haas avocado, peeled and rough chop (about 2/3 cup)
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- Juice of 1/4 lemon

Spaghetti Squash

- 1 large spaghetti squash (about 2 cups spaghetti squash “noodles”)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Sea salt, to taste
- Ground black pepper, to taste



Instructions

1. To a blender add coconut milk, avocado and garlic and blend until smooth. Add remaining ingredients and pulse until fully combined.
2. Transfer sauce to bowl with snap top lid and refrigerate until ready to serve.
3. Preheat oven to 450°F.
4. Carefully cut spaghetti squash in half lengthwise and place each half flat side up on a baking pan. Brush the squash lightly with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. (I do not remove seeds until after baking.)
5. Place pan on middle rack of oven and roast for 40 minutes or until squash begins to brown. If squash is on the smaller side it's a good idea to check it after 30 minutes.
6. Remove squash from oven and allow to cool for 10 minutes. Scoop out seeds and slimy strands with a spoon and discard.

7. Using a fork, work your way around the squash from the inside outward, scraping the strands into a pile. Transfer squash to a bowl and set aside.
8. Bring a medium size skillet to medium heat. Add the squash to skillet and pour in avocado alfredo sauce. Toss or stir to combine and remove from heat once mixture is hot.
9. Portion as desired on plates and serve.

Note:

Garnish with freshly grated parmigiani reggiano and chopped parsley if desired.

DRAFT

Seed & Nut Spiral Zucchini with Fried Egg

Vegetable Medley

2 tablespoons coconut or olive oil
1 large red onion, sliced
1 large red or yellow bell pepper, julienne
1/2 teaspoon sea salt, more as desired
Ground black pepper, to taste
2 large zucchini, sliced into spaghetti strands using a spiral vegetable slicer
1-inch knob fresh ginger, peeled and minced (I like to use a microplane)
2 large cloves fresh garlic, minced (about 1 tablespoon)
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
Juice of 1/2 lemon
Zest of 1 whole lemon (about 2 teaspoons)
1/4 cup raw almonds, adjust as desired
4 teaspoons unsalted sunflower seeds, adjust as desired

Fried Egg

2 large eggs
2 teaspoons olive oil, grass-fed butter
Sea salt, to taste
Ground black pepper, to taste

Instructions

1. Bring cast iron or stainless steel skillet to medium heat and add coconut oil, onions and peppers. Season with salt and pepper and sauté for 2 minutes, tossing vegetables to coat evenly with oil.
2. Set heat to low cover skillet. Sweat onions and peppers for 10 minutes or until soft. Stir occasionally.
3. Turn heat to medium and add zucchini, fresh ginger, garlic, oregano, ground ginger and lemon juice and zest. Mix with tongs until ingredients are fully combined and zucchini begins to soften, about 3 minutes. While zucchini is cooking, bring small nonstick skillet to medium-low heat.
4. Taste vegetable medley to adjust salt and pepper and transfer mixture to two separate plates.
5. Add 1 teaspoon oil of choice to skillet and fry 1 egg, seasoning with salt and pepper. Once egg white turns opaque, flip egg and fry for another 30 seconds (try not to break yolk). Repeat with second egg.
6. Serve each egg atop vegetable medley and add almonds and sunflower seeds.

Servings: 2



Seed, Nut & Veggie Salad with Balsamic Vinaigrette

This delicious, hearty salad is a great choice at any time, especially if you're trying to lose weight. It doesn't contain a lot of fruit, which you may want to consider limiting during periods of focused weight loss because of the natural sugars present in fruit.

Balsamic Vinaigrette

- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 clove garlic, peeled
- 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 3 tablespoons honey (local, raw if possible)
- 1 pinch sea salt
- 1 pinch ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil

Seed, Nut and Veggie Salad

- 1 head romaine or green leaf lettuce, rinsed and chopped (ensure lettuce is dry when serving)
- 1/2 small red onion, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1/2 of 1 red bell pepper
- 1 medium carrot, peeled and sliced
- 1 cup fresh pineapple, cubed
- 1 pinch sea salt
- 1 pinch ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup raw almonds, adjust as desired
- 2 tablespoons unsalted sunflower seeds, adjust as desired

Instructions

1. Add all ingredients but olive oil to blender and blend until smooth. Slowly add olive oil until vinaigrette thickens. Taste to adjust for salt and refrigerate at least 1 hour before using.
2. To assemble salad, toss all ingredients except almonds and sunflower seeds in large mixing bowl until fully incorporated. Season with a pinch of salt and pepper and add mixture to plates.
3. Add vinaigrette to liking and top with top evenly with almonds and sunflower seeds.

Servings: 2 entrees, 4 side salads



DRAFT

Below you'll find two modifications to the Seed, Nut and Veggie Salad with Balsamic Vinaigrette.

Both of these dishes can be eaten every day of the week if you like. In the top photo we've simply added some sliced strawberries, and in the bottom photo we've added a fried egg to that.

The only caveat is that if your goal is immediate weight loss, you may want to take it easy on the fruit during this timeframe because of the sugar in the strawberries, especially if you're eating any of the snacks and treats that contain sugar. But then, if you're going for focused weight loss it's a good idea to limit sweet snacks during these times anyhow.

The primary goal here is to show how easy it is to shake up a recipe. By simply adding one or two additional ingredients you get an entirely new meal.



Fruit & Veggie Salad with Strawberry Vinaigrette

This recipe is probably better suited for **CATEGORY B**, meals that you should eat only up to three times per week, because it contains goat cheese. While goat cheese isn't dairy, you should still moderate your consumption of cheese products.

So I'll leave this up to you even though the final version of this recipe will not contain goat cheese if it's kept in the daily meals category. But just use your head. If you're following THE PROGRAM at the moment with an eye on immediate weight loss, simply omit the goat cheese every now and then if you truly are eating salads on a daily basis.

Strawberry Vinaigrette

- 1 lemon, juiced (no seeds)
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons white wine vinegar
- 6 large strawberries
- 3 tablespoons honey
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 pinch ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup olive oil

Fruit and Veggie Salad

- 1 head romaine or green leaf lettuce, rinsed and chopped (ensure lettuce is dry when serving)
- 1/2 small red onion, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1/2 of 1 orange bell pepper
- 1 cup fresh pineapple, cubed
- 1 Red Anjou pear, quartered and cubed
- 1/2 cup blackberries
- 1 pinch sea salt
- 1 pinch ground black pepper
- 2 ounces goat cheese
- 1/4 cup raw almonds, adjust as desired

Instructions

1. For vinaigrette, add all ingredients but olive oil to blender and blend until smooth. Slowly add olive oil until vinaigrette thickens. Taste to adjust for salt and refrigerate at least 1 hour before using. If you can wait that long.
2. To assemble salad, toss all ingredients except goat cheese in large mixing bowl until fully incorporated. Season with a pinch of salt and pepper and add mixture to plates.
3. Add vinaigrette to liking and top with goat cheese.

Servings: 2 entrees, 4 side salads



Fruit & Veggie Salad with Lemon Vinaigrette

Lemon Vinaigrette

- 1 lemon, juiced (about 2 tablespoons)
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 3 tablespoons white wine vinegar
- 3 tablespoons honey
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 pinch ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil

Fruit and Veggie Salad

- 1 head romaine or green leaf lettuce, rinsed and chopped (ensure lettuce is dry when serving)
- 1/2 small red onion, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 pear, sliced and cubed
- 1/2 cup fresh strawberries, sliced
- 1/2 cup red grapes
- 1 cup fresh pineapple, cubed
- 1 pinch sea salt
- 1 pinch ground black pepper

Instructions

1. Add all ingredients but olive oil to blender and blend until smooth. Slowly add olive oil until vinaigrette thickens. Taste to adjust for salt and refrigerate at least 1 hour before using.
2. To assemble salad, toss all ingredients except goat cheese in large mixing bowl until fully incorporated. Season with a pinch of salt and pepper and add mixture to plates.
3. Add vinaigrette as desired and serve.

Servings: 2 entrees, 4 side salads

Guacamole Salad

This refreshing, citrusy salad works equally well as a main course or side dish. Dress it up by topping it with grilled chicken tenders, serve it over a bowl of quinoa or use it as a salsa for salmon or a grass-fed steak.

Dressing

Zest of 1 lime (about 1 teaspoon)
Juice of 2 limes
Juice of 1 lemon
1/4 cup olive oil
1 teaspoon sea salt
1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper

Guacamole Salad

1 pint grape tomatoes, halved (16-18 ounces)
1 large cucumber, peeled, seeded and chopped
1 yellow or orange bell pepper, diced
1 small red onion, diced
2 large, ripe Haas avocados
1-2 jalapeno peppers, small dice
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 cup fresh unpacked cilantro, minced (about 2 tablespoons minced)
1 tablespoon T-Rev's Original Chili Spice Mix

Instructions

1. Squeeze grape tomatoes over sink or trash can to remove seeds and gel.
2. Combine all ingredients for dressing in a small glass bowl and whisk well. Set aside.
3. Cut the avocados in half and remove the pit. Use a spoon to scoop out the flesh. Slice avocados in half, then chop into chunks about 1/2" wide.
4. Add all ingredients for salad to a large bowl and mix gently with a spoon until combined.
5. Pour dressing over salad in toss to coat.
6. Taste to adjust seasoning.
7. Refrigerate at least 1 hour prior to serving.

Yield: 4-5 cups

Note:

If you beef up this salad by adding chicken or another lean meat, treat it as a **CATEGORY B** recipe. Likewise, if you pair it with beef, treat it as a **CATEGORY C** recipe.



Chicken Soup

Roasted Chicken

- 1 small whole chicken (4-5 pounds), to yield 4 cups chopped meat
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Sea salt, to taste
- Ground black pepper, to taste

Chicken Stock

- 5 quarts water
- 1 chicken carcass (from roasted chicken)
- 1 medium sweet onion, peeled and quartered
- 2 cloves whole fresh garlic, peeled and crushed
- 2 stalks celery, halved (including leaves)
- 2 large carrots, peeled and halved
- 8 sprigs fresh thyme
- 1 large sprig fresh rosemary
- 3 sprigs fresh Italian parsley
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 tablespoons sea salt
- 1 teaspoon whole black peppercorns (or 1/2 teaspoon fresh cracked pepper)

Chicken Soup

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 large sweet onion, diced
- 4 ribs celery, diced
- 3 large carrots, peeled and diced
- 1 pinch sea salt
- Cracked black pepper, to taste
- 4 cloves fresh garlic, minced
- 1½ dried oregano
- Chicken stock

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Rub fresh chicken with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Place chicken on rack in a roasting pan and insert into breast meat an oven-safe thermometer set to 165°F. Roast until chicken reaches temperature or is cooked fully throughout.

2. Remove chicken from oven when done and rest for 20 minutes, or until chicken has cooled enough to use hands to remove meat. Pull all meat from bird, chop roughly and place in fridge until ready to add to soup.
3. Add all chicken stock ingredients to large stockpot set to high heat and cover with lid. Once water starts to boil, reduce heat to low and simmer for 4 hours.
4. Using a colander, strain stock into two large bowls and set aside. Discard chicken carcass and all vegetables. Rinse stockpot clean and return to low heat.
5. Add olive oil to stockpot and add onion, celery and carrots and season with salt and pepper. Stir to combine, cover pot and sweat vegetables for 10 minutes or until soft.
6. Add garlic and chicken stock to stockpot and set to high heat and cover. Once water starts to boil, reduce heat to low, add chopped chicken and simmer for 10 minutes.
7. Taste to adjust seasoning if necessary and serve in bowls with quinoa or egg noodles.

Yield: about 1 gallon



Butternut Squash Soup

- 1 butternut squash (about 2 pounds), halved lengthwise, seeded
- 1 tablespoons coconut oil or olive oil
- 1 cup sweet onion, diced
- 2 teaspoons light brown sugar, packed
- 1 teaspoon fresh minced ginger, packed
- 3 garlic cloves, coarsely chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt, more to taste
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 3 cups chicken stock (homemade –see Chicken Soup recipe), more as necessary
- 2 tablespoons grass-fed butter
- Fresh parsley, chopped

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Oil baking sheet. Place squash, cut side down, on baking sheet. Bake until squash is very soft, about 50 minutes. Using paring knife, remove peel from squash; discard peel. Cut squash into 2-inch pieces.
2. Heat oil in heavy large pot over medium-low heat. Mix in onion, brown sugar, ginger, garlic and cinnamon. Cover pot and cook until onion is tender, about 15 minutes.
3. Add squash and 5 cups chicken stock. Bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium-low. Cover and simmer 10 minutes.
4. Working in batches, purée soup in blender. Return soup to pot, add butter, and stir. Add more salt and pepper to taste. Bring to simmer, thinning soup with more stock if necessary. Ladle into bowls. Sprinkle with parsley and serve.

Yield: about 1½ quarts



Tomato Soup

Awesomeness. Sheer awesomeness.

2½ pounds fresh Roma tomatoes, rinsed and dried
6 cloves garlic, chopped
2 small yellow onions, sliced
1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
Sea salt, to taste
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
1 quart chicken stock ([recipe p. xx](#))
2 bay leaves
4 tablespoons butter
1/2 cup chopped fresh basil leaves, more to garnish

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 450°F.
2. Slice tomatoes in half and squeeze out seeds, gel and any pulp that falls out easily, leaving primarily the meaty flesh behind.
3. Combine tomato halves, onion and garlic in a large mixing bowl. Add olive oil, salt and pepper, and toss to coat evenly.
4. Transfer tomato mixture to a rimmed baking sheet lined with silicone liner or thin layer of oil. Spread ingredients evenly so they don't overlap.
5. Place baking sheet in oven on middle rack and roast tomato mixture for 30 mins or until ingredients are caramelized.
6. Remove baking sheet from oven and allow ingredients to cool for 10 minutes. Add tomato mixture, basil and 1-2 cups of chicken stock to a blender and blend on high speed until fully pureed.
7. Transfer tomato puree to a stockpot set to medium-high heat and add remaining chicken stock, bay leaves and butter. As soon as soup begins to boil, reduce heat to low, whisk soup to ensure all ingredients are combined and cover pot with lid. Simmer for 20 minutes, remove bay leaves and serve.

Note:

You may substitute 1/2 teaspoon of ground bay leaves for whole bay leaves.



Jamaican Curry Lentil Soup

(coming soon)



DRAFT

Sautéed Mushroom Spinach Salad

(coming soon)



DRAFT

Tuna Spinach Salad

Amazing. Easy. Delicious.

This recipe probably belongs in **CATEGORY B** if you're using cheese every time, but the protein, vitamins and minerals you get in this light meal justifies its placement among daily meals.

- 3 (5 ounce) cans albacore tuna
- 2 (15½ ounce) cans white beans
- 1 medium green bell pepper, small dice
- 1 medium yellow bell pepper, small dice
- 2 stalks celery, small chop
- 1 small yellow onion, small dice
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 teaspoon sea salt, adjust to taste
- 1/2 cracked black pepper, adjust to taste
- 10 ounces fresh spinach
- 4 teaspoons freshly shaved parmesan cheese (optional)
- 2 green onions (scallions), chopped

Instructions

1. Combine all ingredients except spinach, parmesan cheese and scallions in a large bowl and mix thoroughly.
2. Serve tuna mixture on bed of fresh spinach leaves and garnish with a light layer of parmesan cheese and a pinch of scallions.

Servings: 4

Note:

1. Substitute parmesan cheese with any aged cheese of choice, such as asiago or feta. I find it's easiest just to grate cheese over each salad prior to serving.



CATEGORY

B

(up to 3 meals per week)

Grilled Chicken Salad with Lemon Vinaigrette

As fantastic and fresh as this salad looks, the gold star may just have to go to the dressing. Seriously. There's a reason this recipe had to be first. This vinaigrette might be the best one you ever taste.

Except for the goat cheese (which rules, by the way; there's no way I'd eliminate this from any diet), this dish is perfectly paleo for strict paleo dieters.

Lemon Vinaigrette

- 1 lemon, juiced (about 2 tablespoons)
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 3 tablespoons white wine vinegar
- 3 tablespoons honey
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 pinch ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil

Grilled Chicken

- 2 chicken breasts
- 1-2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 pinch sea salt, each side
- 1 pinch ground black pepper, each side
- Garlic powder, to taste

Salad

- 1 head romaine or green leaf lettuce, rinsed and chopped (ensure lettuce is dry when serving)
- 1/2 small red onion, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 pear, sliced and cubed
- 1/2 cup fresh strawberries, sliced
- 1/2 cup red grapes
- 1 cup fresh pineapple, cubed
- 1 pinch sea salt
- 1 pinch ground black pepper
- 2 ounces goat cheese

Instructions

1. Add all ingredients but olive oil to blender and blend until smooth. Slowly add olive oil until vinaigrette thickens. Taste to adjust for salt and refrigerate at least 1 hour before using. If you can wait that long.
2. Preheat grill to 400°F.

3. Rub olive oil on both sides of chicken breasts and season with salt, pepper, and garlic powder. Place chicken on grill and cook to internal temperature of 160°F, then rest for 5 minutes and slice.
4. To assemble salad, toss all ingredients except goat cheese in large mixing bowl until fully incorporated. Season with a pinch of salt and pepper and add mixture to plates.
5. Add vinaigrette to liking and top with sliced chicken breast and add goat cheese. Prepare self for bliss while trying to contain disbelief that this is actually healthy.

Servings: 2 entrees, 4 side salads



Chicken Caesar Salad

This may be one of the most authentic tasting Caesar dressings you'll ever find that doesn't call for anchovies and egg yolks, but I offer this everyday twist on the classic simply for ease of use and preparation, especially for the beginner cook.

That said, by all means add 3-4 anchovy fillets packed in oil to kick up the authenticity even further. Anchovies deliver many health benefits including essential fatty acids and protein. You can't go wrong regardless of the direction you choose to take.

Caesar Dressing

- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
- 1/4 cup fresh squeezed orange juice (about 1 orange)
- 2 tablespoons raw honey
- 2 large cloves garlic, peeled
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil

Chicken Caesar Salad

- 1 head Romaine lettuce, chopped
- 1/2 cup red onion, thinly sliced
- 3/4 cup pitted black olives, whole
- 6 strips crisp bacon (I prefer Applegate Farms)
- 1 tablespoon grated parmesan cheese
- 1 pinch sea salt
- 1 pinch cracked black pepper
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 boneless chicken breasts
- Sea salt, to taste
- Cracked black pepper, to taste
- Caesar dressing, to taste
- 2 ounces goat cheese or feta cheese
- 1/2 cup raw whole almonds, adjust as desired

Instructions

1. For Caesar dressing, add all ingredients but olive oils to blender and blend until smooth. Slowly add olive oils separately until vinaigrette thickens. Taste to adjust for salt and refrigerate at least one hour before serving.
2. Rinse Romaine lettuce thoroughly in a colander. Pat or spin dry, and set lettuce aside in a large mixing bowl.
3. Pan fry or microwave bacon strips until crisp. Set aside to cool then crumble.
4. Add onion, olives, bacon and parmesan cheese to lettuce. Season lightly with salt and pepper and toss to combine.
5. Preheat grill to 400°F.
6. Rub chicken breasts thoroughly with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Grill until internal temperature of at least 160°F. Rest at least 5 minutes before slicing.
7. Add salad mixture to plates and top with your choice of cheese and almonds. Add Caesar dressing to taste.
8. Slice chicken breasts into strips, add to salad and serve.

Servings: 2 entrees, 4 side salads

Note:

1. If you prefer to cook the chicken on the stove instead of on the grill, slice each breast widthwise into 1/4-inch wide strips and instead add olive oil to nonstick skillet set to medium-high heat. Season with a pinch of salt and pepper and cook for 10-12 minutes, or until chicken is cooked throughout.



Chicken Salad with Balsamic Vinaigrette

(coming soon)



Asiago Chicken Salad

(coming soon)



Bacon, Egg & Cheese Salad with Lemon Vinaigrette

(coming soon)



Tuscan Herb Grilled Chicken Salad

(coming soon)



Southwest Chicken Salad with Lemon-Lime Vinaigrette

Lemon-Lime Vinaigrette

- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 clove fresh garlic, peeled
- 2 tablespoons white wine vinegar
- Juice of 1 lemon
- Juice of 1 lime
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 pinch sea salt
- 1 pinch ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil

Pico de Gallo

- 3 fresh, ripe on-the-vine or plum tomatoes
- 3 cloves fresh garlic, minced
- 1/2 small red onion, small dice
- 1 small jalapeno, small dice (optional)
- 1/2 cup fresh cilantro, minced (about 1 tablespoon after mincing)
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- Juice of 1/2 lime
- Sea salt, to taste
- Ground black pepper, to taste

Grilled Chicken

- 2 chicken breasts
- 1-2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 pinch sea salt, each side
- 1 pinch ground black pepper, each side
- Garlic powder, to taste

Salad

- 1 head romaine or green leaf lettuce, rinsed, dried and chopped
- 1/2 small red onion, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1/2 of 1 orange bell pepper, julienne
- 2 ounces goat cheese
- 1 cup fresh pineapple, cubed
- 1 pinch sea salt

1 pinch ground black pepper

1 large Haas avocado (1/2 per salad), sliced and reserved until plating

Instructions

1. For vinaigrette, add all ingredients but olive oil to blender and blend until smooth. Slowly add olive oil until vinaigrette thickens. Taste to adjust for salt and refrigerate at least one hour before using.
2. For pico de gallo, add all ingredients to a medium size bowl and stir until fully combined. Refrigerate at least 1 hour prior to serving.
3. Preheat grill to 400°F.
4. Rub olive oil on both sides of chicken breasts and season with salt, pepper, and garlic powder. Place chicken on grill and cook to internal temperature of 160°F, then rest for 5 minutes and slice.
5. To assemble salad, toss all ingredients except goat cheese in large mixing bowl until fully incorporated. Season with a pinch of salt and pepper and add mixture to plates.
6. Add vinaigrette to liking and top with sliced chicken breast, avocado, and pico de gallo and add goat cheese.



Chicken Fajita Salad with Pineapple Cilantro Vinaigrette

I never thought I'd get inspiration for a new recipe from a Yankee Candle store but there's a first time for everything.

My girlfriend and I were smelling some new holiday flair at the mall around Christmastime and I noticed a pineapple cilantro candle, which gave me an idea for this vinaigrette later that evening.

Subpar candle fragrance, outstanding vinaigrette flavor.

Pineapple Cilantro Vinaigrette

- 2 cups pineapple, cubed (about 1/2 of a pineapple)
- 1 fistful fresh cilantro (about 2 cups, not packed)
- 1 clove fresh garlic
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- Juice of 1 lime
- 1/4 cup white wine vinegar
- 1 pinch sea salt
- 1 pinch ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil

Pico de Gallo

- 3 fresh, ripe on-the-vine or plum tomatoes
- 3 cloves fresh garlic, minced
- 1/2 small red onion, small dice
- 1/2 cup fresh cilantro, minced (about 1 tablespoon after mincing)
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- Juice of 1/2 lime
- Sea salt, to taste
- Ground black pepper, to taste
- Red pepper flakes, to taste (optional)

Chicken Fajita Salad

- 1 large head romaine lettuce, rinsed, dried and chopped
- 1/2 small red onion, julienne
- 1/2 red or green bell pepper, julienne
- 2 cups pineapple, cubed
- 4 fresh chicken breasts
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt, adjust to taste
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper, adjust to taste
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder, adjust to taste

- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 cup monterey jack cheese, shredded

Instructions

1. For vinaigrette, add all ingredients to blender except olive oil and blend until smooth. Slowly drizzle olive oil until desired consistency. Refrigerate at least 1 hour prior to use.
2. For pico de gallo, combine all ingredients thoroughly in a small mixing bowl and refrigerate at least 1 hour prior to serving.
3. For salad, combine lettuce, onion, peppers, and pineapple in large mixing bowl and toss until ingredients are mixed thoroughly. Place in fridge until ready to serve.
4. Preheat grill to 400°F.
5. Lightly oil chicken breasts and coat evenly with salt, pepper, and garlic powder.
6. Grill chicken on medium/medium low heat until internal temp reaches 160°F. Allow to rest for five minutes, then slice into desired size strips if serving immediately.
7. When ready to serve, add salad to plates and top with vinaigrette and sliced chicken. Top chicken with pico de gallo and garnish with cheese.

You'll be doing a Mexican hat dance after this one.

Servings: 4 entrees, 8 side salads

Note:

One pineapple will be sufficient for the entire recipe.



Chicken Curry with Flat Bread

Flat Bread

1/2 cup almond flour
1/2 cup sprouted wheat flour (substitute whole grain whole wheat flour)
1 cup full fat coconut milk
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1 pinch sea salt
Coconut or olive oil, to cook

Chicken Curry

1½ pound skinless chicken thighs, cut into bite-sized pieces
2 tablespoons coconut oil (or olive oil)
1 bay leaf
2 white onions, chopped
1 inch knob ginger, peeled and minced
4 cloves garlic, minced
2 tomatoes, chopped
1 teaspoon sea salt, adjust to taste
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon turmeric powder
1 teaspoon Kashmiri chili powder (substitutes include Mexican chile powder or cayenne, depending on heat preferred, if you don't have this ingredient)
1/2 teaspoon paprika
1/2 teaspoon garam masala (substitute 1/2 teaspoon curry powder if you don't have this ingredient)
1 cup water
1 tablespoon grass-fed butter
Cilantro, chopped

Instructions

1. Preheat a medium size nonstick skillet to medium-low heat.
2. Mix bread ingredients together in a bowl until fully combined. Add 1 teaspoon coconut or olive oil to skillet. Using a ladle or small measuring cup, pour batter into skillet to make 5- to 6-inch bread rounds one at a time. Cook 3 minutes on first side then flip and cook an additional 2-3 minutes. Remove and set aside on baking rack, repeating until batter is gone (yields about 4 flat breads).
3. Bring large stockpot to medium high heat and add 1 tablespoon coconut oil. Add chicken to pot. Add 1/2 teaspoon salt and sauté just until chicken starts to brown (about 5 minutes). Remove from pot and set aside on a plate.

4. Turn stockpot to medium low heat and add remaining tablespoon oil. Add onions, bay leaf and remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt. Stirring frequently, cook onions for 8-10 minutes or until they begin to caramelize.
5. Add ginger, garlic, and tomatoes. Stir, cover pot, and for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
6. Add chicken to pot along with spices and water. Cover and turn heat to low once mixture begins to simmer. Cook for 20 minutes or until the chicken is fully cooked.
7. Remove stockpot lid and add butter. Cook for 5 additional minutes to reduce the broth.
8. Ladle curry into individual serving bowls by itself or serve over quinoa. Garnish with cilantro.

Servings: 4

Note:

1. Be sure not to stack flat bread rounds on top of one another as you remove them from skillet, as they will retain moisture and not remain firm.



Turkey Lettuce Wrap with Avocado Salsa & Soy Sesame Vinaigrette

Avocado Salsa

- 3 plum tomatoes, diced
- 1/2 red onion, peeled and diced
- 3 cloves fresh garlic, peeled and chopped
- 1 ripe Haas avocado, sliced into small chunks
- 1 pear, diced
- Juice of 1/2 fresh lime
- Sea salt, to taste
- Ground black pepper, to taste

Soy Sesame Vinaigrette

- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 clove fresh garlic, peeled
- 2 tablespoons low sodium soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 1/4 teaspoon sesame oil
- 3 tablespoons honey
- 1 pinch kosher salt, pepper
- 1/2 cup olive oil

Turkey Lettuce Wraps

- 1 head Boston lettuce, rinsed and dried
- 2 teaspoons sesame seeds
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 pound ground beef (80/20 or leaner)
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/4 red pepper flakes (omit if heat-sensitive)
- Sea salt, to taste
- Ground black pepper, to taste

Instructions

1. For salsa, add all ingredients to small bowl and mix thoroughly with a spoon. Taste to adjust salt if necessary, then refrigerate at least 30 minutes before serving.
2. For vinaigrette, add all ingredients except oil to blender and blend until smooth. Slowly add oil while blending until vinaigrette thickens to desired consistency. Refrigerate at least 30 minutes prior to serving.
3. Preheat frying pan to medium high heat. Add ground turkey to pan along with Worcestershire sauce, garlic and onion powder, pepper flakes and salt and pepper, and cook until meat is no longer pink.
4. Remove turkey from heat and allow to cool in pan for 5 minutes.
5. Arrange Boston lettuce leaves on a serving tray or plate.
6. Add turkey to lettuce leaves and top with salsa and sesame seeds. Serve with soy sesame vinaigrette.

Servings: 2 entrees, 4 appetizers

Note:

To peel avocado, cut avocado in half lengthwise around the pit using a sharp knife. Twist avocado apart. To remove pit, carefully strike pit with knife and give a quarter turn. Pit should pop out with the knife. Scoop out avocado along inside of the skin and slice into chunks.



Chicken & Broccoli Alfredo

Avocado Alfredo Sauce

- 1 cup coconut milk
- 1 large Haas avocado, peeled and rough chop (about 2/3 cup)
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- Juice of 1/4 lemon

Spaghetti Squash

- 1 large spaghetti squash (about 2 cups spaghetti squash "noodles")
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Sea salt, to taste
- Ground black pepper, to taste

Instructions

1. To a blender add coconut milk, avocado and garlic and blend until smooth. Add remaining ingredients and pulse until fully combined.
2. Transfer sauce to bowl with snap top lid and refrigerate until ready to serve.
3. Preheat oven to 450°F.
4. Carefully cut spaghetti squash in half lengthwise and place each half flat side up on a baking pan. Brush the squash lightly with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. (I do not remove seeds until after baking.)
5. Place pan on middle rack of oven and roast for 40 minutes or until squash begins to brown. If squash is on the smaller side it's a good idea to check it after 30 minutes.
6. Remove squash from oven and allow to cool for 10 minutes. Scoop out seeds and slimy strands with a spoon and discard.
7. Using a fork, work your way around the squash from the inside outward, scraping the strands into a pile. Transfer squash to a bowl and set aside.
8. Bring a medium size skillet to medium heat. Add the squash to skillet and pour in avocado alfredo sauce. Toss or stir to combine and remove from heat once mixture is hot.
9. Portion as desired on plates and serve.

Note:

Garnish with freshly grated parmigiani reggiano and chopped parsley if desired.



DR

Shrimp Fried Quinoa

(coming soon)



Pork & Veggie Stir-Fry

(coming soon)



Sweet & Savory Pork Stir-Fry

(coming soon)



Spaghetti Squash Stir-Fry

(coming soon)

Note: Eliminate the cheese to move to **CATEGORY A**.



Squash-on-Squash Stir-Fry

(coming soon)

Note: Eliminate the cheese to move to **CATEGORY A**.



PF “Tang” Lettuce Wraps

(coming soon)



Spiral Zucchini with Grilled Chicken

Vegetable Medley

2 tablespoons coconut or olive oil
1 large red onion, sliced
1 large red or yellow bell pepper, julienne
1/2 teaspoon sea salt, more as desired
Ground black pepper, to taste
2 large zucchini, sliced into spaghetti strands using a spiral vegetable slicer
1-inch knob fresh ginger, peeled and minced (I like to use a microplane)
2 large cloves fresh garlic, minced (about 1 tablespoon)
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
Juice of 1/2 lemon
Zest of 1 whole lemon (about 2 teaspoons)

Grilled Chicken

4-6 chicken tenders
1 teaspoon olive oil
Sea salt, to taste
Ground black pepper, to taste

Instructions

1. Bring cast iron or stainless steel skillet to medium heat and add coconut oil, onions and peppers. Season with salt and pepper and sauté for 2 minutes, tossing vegetables to coat evenly with oil.
2. Set heat to low cover skillet. Sweat onions and peppers for 10 minutes or until soft. Stir occasionally. Remove from heat and set aside until ready to prepare meal.
3. Preheat grill to 400°F. Rub chicken with olive oil and season evenly with salt and pepper to taste. Grill chicken for 3-4 minutes per side with lid closed. Remove from heat when fully cooked (internal temperature of at least 160°F) and rest for five minutes.
4. Reheat skillet with onions and peppers over medium heat and add zucchini, fresh ginger, garlic, oregano, ground ginger and lemon juice and zest. Mix with tongs until ingredients are fully combined and zucchini begins to soften, about 3 minutes.
5. Taste to adjust salt and pepper and serve topped with grilled chicken.

Servings: 2



Spiral Zucchini with Egg & Cheese

(coming soon)



DRAFT

Spaghetti Bolognese

As someone who's given up processed foods, it's somewhat difficult to advocate the use of canned tomatoes in this recipe. However, until we're all able to grow and can 100% of our own fruits and vegetables, there are going to be times when we have to purchase manufactured goods. My rule of thumb is to stick to products sold as the single ingredient I'm looking for, like tomato puree that may contain citric acid or almond butter that's simply almonds and sea salt.

You'll notice this recipe calls for tomato puree instead of tomato sauce. I like to control all of the flavor in my recipes, and tomato sauce comes pre-seasoned and often contains "natural flavors," which almost always means unhealthy additives. So stick to ingredients that are as pure as possible. You'll also notice that this recipe contains *no added sugar*, but you'd never know it when you eat it.

2 tablespoon olive oil
2 medium (or 1 ½ large) sweet onions, diced (about 4 cups)
1 large green bell pepper, diced (about 1 ½ cups)
2 teaspoons sea salt
1/2 teaspoon cracked black pepper
3 pounds ground turkey
1 pinch sea salt
1 pinch cracked black pepper
1 (28 ounce) can petite diced tomatoes
3 (29 ounce) can tomato puree
2 cups chicken stock ([recipe p. xxx](#))
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
2 cups (unpacked) fresh Italian parsley, minced (about 1/2 cup minced)
6 cloves fresh garlic, minced (about 2 tablespoons)
5 teaspoons dried oregano
1 teaspoon ground thyme
1 teaspoon cinnamon
4 teaspoons sea salt
1 teaspoon cracked black pepper
2 bay leaves (or 1/2 teaspoon ground bay leaves)
4 tablespoons grass-fed butter

Instructions

1. Bring large stock pot to medium low heat.
2. Add olive oil, onion and bell peppers to pot and season with salt and pepper. Stir to combine and cover pot. Sweat mixture for 10 minutes, or until vegetables are soft.
3. Move onion and peppers to outer edge of stock pot, leaving center exposed. Turn heat to high and add ground turkey. Season with a pinch of salt and pepper. Use large spoon to break turkey apart and brown for 10 minutes, or until turkey is crumbled and fully cooked.

4. Add diced tomatoes, tomato puree, chicken stock and Worcestershire sauce and stir to combine. Cover with lid until sauce bubbles, then reduce heat to low and stir in all remaining ingredients.
5. Simmer sauce for at least 2 hours, stirring occasionally to prevent it from sticking to bottom of pot.
6. Remove bay leaves and serve over spiral cut zucchini noodles, spaghetti squash or quinoa. Garnish with fresh parsley or shaved parmigiana reggiano cheese.



Yield: about 6 quarts

Note:

If serving with spiral-cut zucchini, preheat a nonstick skillet to medium heat and sauté for three minutes with salt and pepper, tossing to heat zucchini evenly.

However, before adding zucchini to the pan, press or squeeze the strands between paper towels to remove as much water as possible. Because zucchini is a non-starchy vegetable, it won't naturally thicken the liquid in the spaghetti sauce. This way you shouldn't have to contend with a pool of excess water on your plate. The photo below shows much less excess liquid than it would have if I didn't press the zucchini first (this amount is easily reabsorbed into the mixture once you stir it a bit).

And here's an important tip whenever you happen to use regular wheat pasta noodles: *Never* rinse your noodles after boiling them, as this removes the starch necessary for naturally absorbing and thickening the liquid in the sauce, preventing excess water from accumulating beneath the noodles.



Braised Venison Steaks

Can't forget about our hunter friends. Wild game like venison is very lean and healthy. However, this also is the reason it's very easy to overcook and dry out to the point of inedibility. We've all been there, even those of us who like to write cookbooks. So this slow-cook method is a great way to ensure your venison turns out juicy, tender and delicious.

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1/2 sweet onion, diced
1 large carrot, peeled and chopped
2 stalks celery ribs, chopped
1 pinch sea salt
1 pinch ground black pepper
2 plum tomatoes, diced (substitute 1 (14.5 ounce) can diced tomatoes, drained)
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 tablespoon minced Italian parsley leaves
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 tablespoon tomato paste
1/4 cup water
1 pound venison steak, cut into 3 or 4 chunks
1 pinch sea salt
1 pinch ground black pepper
2 ounces crumbled gorgonzola cheese

Instructions

1. Add olive oil to stock pot set to medium heat. Sauté onion, carrot and celery with salt and pepper for five minutes, stirring consistently, or until vegetables begin to soften.
2. Add tomatoes, garlic, parsley, oregano, tomato paste and water and stir to combine. Heat until it just starts to boil, then turn heat to low.
3. Sprinkle venison steak chunks with salt and pepper and add to stock pot, taking care NOT to submerge chunks any more than halfway in liquid. (Keep an eye on this as the meat cooks, draining liquid with a turkey baster if necessary, as the meat will be tough if it boils instead of braises.)
4. Braise meat on low heat at barely a simmer for 3 hours.
5. Remove venison from pot and shred with a fork. Meat should pull apart easily if cooked "low and slow."
6. Serve venison topped with vegetable sauce and gorgonzola cheese. For a more substantial meal, serve with quinoa and steamed veggies.

Servings: 2-4

Note:

This recipe is a great candidate for a crock pot, as even some high quality cooktops can't maintain a consistently low heat capable of allowing food to simmer without increasing to a boil unbeknownst to the cook. So adding all ingredients to a crock pot and setting it to low heat throughout the day will also do the trick.



Lemon Chicken Spaghetti

(coming soon)



Maryland Crab Soup

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
2 large sweet onions, diced
3 large celery stalks, chopped
3 large carrots, peeled and chopped
Sea salt, to taste
Cracked black pepper, to taste
2 large tomatoes, skinned, cored and diced (substitute 1 (29 ounce) can diced tomatoes, drained)
4 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon onion powder
4 quarts homemade chicken stock (see Chicken Soup recipe p. xx)
2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
Bouquet garni (2 bay leaves, 6 sprigs thyme, 4 sprigs Italian parsley)
2 tablespoons T-Rev's Original Chesapeake Bay Mix, adjust to taste
1 cup fresh corn, cut from cob
1 cup fresh green beans, snapped
1 pound (about 4 cups) Maryland backfin lump crab meat (if picking your own crab meat, reserve cleaned claws and shells for stock)
1/2 cup acine di pepi noodles (optional)

Instructions

1. Bring large stockpot to low heat and add oil. Cook onion, celery and carrot with a pinch of salt and pepper for about 10 minutes, lid on, stirring occasionally.
2. Add diced tomatoes and garlic and onion powder. Season with a bit more salt and pepper to taste if desired.
3. Add chicken stock, Worcestershire sauce, bouquet garni and crab shells (if you have them) to pot in addition to Bay Mix (start with 1 tablespoon if desired, as it will add heat to soup). Bring mixture to a boil, then reduce to low heat to simmer for 30 minutes with lid on. Stir occasionally.
4. Add corn and green beans and simmer for another 10-12 minutes. Stir.
5. Add crab meat and noodles, and cook for 10-15 minutes longer. Be sure soup is on a low simmer, as a rapid boil will dissolve or shred crab meat.

Yield: 4-5 quarts

Notes:

1. One trick to turning out authentic Maryland crab soup is to use Maryland blue crab meat. If you don't live in Maryland, all is not lost; you can order it online from any number of restaurants and distributors. But if you can pick your own, even better.

2. The other trick is to wrap several cleaned crab shells and claws in cheese cloth and submerge in the stock for added flavor. If you don't have access to freshly picked crabs, this isn't a deal-breaker, but adding this extra flavor just puts the soup over the top.
3. If you don't have the time or energy to prepare your own homemade chicken stock, substitute 2 quarts prepared chicken stock or broth plus 2 quarts water. NEVER use processed bouillon cubes; they're ultra-high in sodium and often contain chemicals like MSG.
4. To create bouquet garni, wrap herbs in cheese cloth and tie with butcher's twine (see photo). Combine with crab shells and claws if using them to flavor the stock.
5. I like to put my own spin on things, so I use acine di pepi noodles. They're tiny beads of pasta the size of a BB. You can substitute these with two peeled and diced Idaho potatoes (add at the same time you'd otherwise add the pasta). Or omit these entirely.



Turkey Noodle Soup

Perfect for Thanksgiving leftovers. This recipe appears in **CATEGORY B** because it contains meat and a relatively small amount of egg noodles (wheat flour) so I wouldn't suggest making it part of a daily diet. However, if you're gaining weight or failing to lose weight while eating this delicious, nutritious soup every day, you're most likely doing something else wrong.

2 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
2 large onions, diced (about 4 cups)
2 large carrots, peeled and chopped (about 2 cups)
2 large celery stalks chopped (about 2 cups)
2 sweet peppers, chopped (about 1/2 cup)
3 bay leaves
2 teaspoons sea salt, adjust to taste
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
4 cups cooked turkey (breast/dark meat), chopped (about 1 pound)
6 cloves garlic, minced
4 quarts homemade turkey stock (p. xxx – substitute chicken carcass with turkey carcass)
1½ teaspoons dried oregano
1/2 teaspoon ground thyme

Instructions

1. Bring an 8-quart stock pot to medium low heat and olive oil. Add onions, carrots, celery, sweet peppers, salt, pepper and bay leaves. Stir to combine, cover pot with lid and sweat until veggies begin to soften. Turn heat to low, stir and cook until onions are translucent.
2. Add garlic, turkey, stock, oregano and thyme and turn heat to high. Once soup begins to boil, reduce heat to low and simmer for 1 hour.
3. Add egg noodles and simmer until noodles are soft and serve.
4. Taste to adjust salt and other seasonings if necessary.

Maryland Crab Cake

- 1 pound (about 4 cups) freshly picked jumbo lump or backfin crabmeat
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
- 2 tablespoons minced sweet onion
- 1 large egg, beaten
- 1/4 cup Hellman's organic mayo (or homemade mayonnaise [p. xxx](#))
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice (about 1/2 lemon)
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tablespoon T-Rev's Original Chesapeake Bay Mix

Instructions

1. Add all ingredients to a large bowl and *gently* combine by hand until mixed thoroughly.
2. Shape into cakes or balls and broil in oven 8 inches beneath heating element for 10-12 minutes or until cakes are golden brown.

Yield: 10-12 balls or 4 cakes.



Jake's Favorite Meatloaf

- 2 pounds ground turkey
- 1 pound pork sausage
- 1 medium sweet or yellow onion
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup minced Italian parsley (about 2 cups unpacked, include stems)
- 2 teaspoons sea salt
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon allspice
- 1/2 teaspoon ground thyme

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl and mix by hand until thoroughly incorporated.
3. Shape mixture into loaf on sheet pan with sides and bake for 50 minutes or until meat reaches internal temperature of 160°F. (I prefer to insert a digital, oven-safe thermometer set to 160°F. Be sure to do so before placing in oven.)
4. Remove meatloaf and allow to rest 10 minutes prior to removing thermometer and serving.

Servings: 6-8



Grilled Chicken Tacos with Guacamole Sauce

Everyone loves taco night, and this recipe is sure to put smiles on faces from the kiddos to adults alike. Packed with protein and healthy fats, these chicken tacos highlight the wondrous potential of fresh ingredients and bring the whole family together for a night of healthy, delicious fun.

Taco Shells

1/2 cup almond flour
1/2 cup tapioca flour
1 cup full fat coconut milk
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1 pinch sea salt
Extra virgin coconut or olive oil, to cook

Yield: 5-6 soft taco shells

Guacamole Sauce

2 ripe Haas avocados, rough mash
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/4 of 1 small red onion, small dice
1 cup (unpacked) cilantro, minced (2-3 tablespoons after mincing)
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
Sea salt, to taste
Ground black pepper, to taste
Juice of 1/2 lime
1/2 cup full fat coconut milk, more as necessary

Grilled Chicken

1 pound chicken tenders or chicken breast
2 teaspoons olive oil
Sea salt, to taste
Ground black pepper, to taste

Condiments

2 plum tomatoes, diced and seasoned to taste with salt and pepper
2 cups shredded romaine lettuce
Goat cheese or monterey jack cheese, if desired
Hot sauce, if desired

Instructions

1. Preheat a medium size nonstick skillet to medium heat.

2. Mix taco shell ingredients together in a medium size bowl until fully combined. Add 1 teaspoon coconut or olive oil to skillet. Using a ladle or small measuring cup, pour batter into skillet to make 5- to 6-inch rounds one at a time. Cook 2 minutes on first side then flip and cook an additional 1-2 minutes. Remove and set aside to cool on baking rack, repeating until batter is gone.
3. Combine all guacamole ingredients except coconut milk in a medium size bowl and mix well with a fork until creamy. Slowly whisk in coconut milk until mixture is very smooth. Add additional milk as desired.
4. Add lime juice, salt and pepper and stir until combined. Taste to adjust salt and pepper if necessary. Refrigerate at least 1 hour prior to serving.
5. Preheat grill to 400°F. Rub chicken with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Depending on thickness, grill chicken 4-6 minutes per side or until done. Remove from heat and rest for 5 minutes, then cut chicken into cubes and place in small bowl.
6. While chicken is resting, dice plum tomatoes, season with salt and pepper and place in small bowl.
7. Serve chicken, guacamole sauce, taco shells and condiments family style.

Yield: 5-6 tacos



Chicken Fajita Quinoa Bowl

(coming soon)



Grilled Salmon with Quinoa-Stuffed Avocado

So they tell me it's pronounced KEEN-wah, but you'll never convince me it isn't KWEE-no. That's just so much cooler. But once you finish this meal, you might actually start calling it KEEN-*whoa*!

Quinoa Stuffing

- 1 cup prepared quinoa (add 1 pinch sea salt, 1 tablespoon grass-fed butter to saucepan when preparing)
- 1 plum tomato, small dice
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup strawberries, chopped
- 1/4 cup peeled cucumber, small dice
- 3/4 cup fresh pineapple, small dice
- 1/2 small red onion, small dice
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- Juice of 1/2 lemon plus zest (about 1/2 teaspoon)

Salmon

- 4 (4 to 6 ounce) wild salmon fillets, deboned
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 lemon, halved
- 2 tablespoons T-Rev's Original Chesapeake Bay Mix or sea salt and pepper, to taste
- 8 (1/4-inch thick) fresh pineapple, sliced widthwise into discs then halved
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Sea salt, to taste
- Ground black pepper, to taste

Avocado

- 4 Haas avocados, halved with pits removed
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Sea salt, to taste
- Ground black pepper, to taste

Instructions

1. (need)



Better (For You) Than Chick-Fil-A Nuggets

2 pounds chicken tenders
4 teaspoons sea salt
3 teaspoons paprika
1½ cups pickle juice
2 large eggs
2 tablespoons coconut milk
1 cup tapioca flour
1 cup coconut flour
1 cup panko bread crumbs
1 tablespoon organic cane sugar
1 teaspoon sea salt
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
1/4 teaspoon baking soda

Servings: 4-6

Instructions

1. Cut chicken tenders into bite-size pieces, about 1 inch wide.
2. Sprinkle chicken tenders with salt and paprika until evenly coated.
3. Place chicken in pickle juice and marinate in snap top container overnight, or at least 6 hours prior to cooking.
4. Preheat oven to 425°F.
5. In a small bowl, whisk together eggs and coconut milk and set aside.
6. Add tapioca flour to a separate bowl and set aside.
7. Combine coconut flour, bread crumbs, sugar, salt, pepper and baking soda in a food processor and pulse until bread crumbs are pulverized and mixture appears finely ground.
8. Dredge chicken pieces in manageable portions in tapioca flour then shake off excess flour using a sifter. Set aside on a plate. Repeat this process until all chicken is dredged in tapioca flour.
9. Dredge a handful of chicken in egg bath, ensuring each piece is entirely wet, then dredge in bread crumb mixture until fully coated. Arrange on a greased cookie sheet and take care not to let nuggets touch each other. Repeat until all chicken is breaded.
10. Bake in oven for 25-30 minutes, or until chicken is fully cooked.
11. Remove chicken nuggets from oven and allow to cook for five minutes.

Note:

Serve nuggets with steamed broccoli, fresh cucumber slices or fresh cabbage slaw (p. xxx). If the kids insist on ketchup, serve the homemade recipe found on p. xxx.



DRAFT

Gluten-Free Margherita Pizza

Gluten-Free Pizza Crust

- 1/2 cup almond flour
- 1/2 cup tapioca flour
- 1 cup full fat coconut milk
- 1 teaspoon oregano
- 1 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 1/4 teaspoon fennel powder
- 1/4 teaspoon paprika
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 pinch crushed red pepper flakes
- 2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil

Pizza Sauce

See recipe on [p. xxx](#). Prepare a batch and keep it in the fridge until ready to use.

Margherita Pizza

- 2 gluten-free pizza crusts
- Pizza sauce, to taste
- 1 ounce grated asiago or parmesan cheese, adjust to taste
- 4 basil leaves, chiffonade

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Whisk all ingredients for pizza crust in a large bowl to form a batter.
3. Set a large nonstick skillet to medium heat and add 1 teaspoon olive oil. Swirl oil to coat entire surface of skillet.
4. Fill a 1/2 cup measuring cup full of batter and pour batter into center of skillet. Swirl skillet gently to spread batter across entire surface.
5. Allow the batter to cook until the bottom firms slightly, about 2 minutes. Using a plastic spatula, carefully flip the crust and cook the other side for 1 minute, then place it on a baking rack.
6. Repeat steps 3-5 to prepare second pizza crust. Transfer both crusts to a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.
7. Bake pizza crusts for 15 minutes or until the crust reaches desired level of crispiness.
8. With a spoon, spread a thin layer of pizza sauce atop each crust. Sprinkle pizza crusts with cheese and return to oven to bake for 5 minutes.
9. Remove pizzas from oven and sprinkle basil atop each. Slice and serve.

Yield: 2 pizzas



DR

Greek Pizza

(coming soon)



Chicken Parmigiana Pizza

(coming soon)



Bruschetta Pizza

(coming soon)



Hawaiian Pizza

(coming soon)



Golumpki

- 1 large head green cabbage
- 1 pound grass-fed ground bison, turkey or lean ground beef
- 1/2 pound lean ground pork
- 1 white onion, minced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup white or brown rice (prepared)
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 (29 ounce) can tomato sauce
- 1 (14.5 ounce) can diced petite tomatoes
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 pinch ground black pepper
- 1 cup sauerkraut, more to taste
- 1 cup reduced sodium chicken broth

Instructions

1. Prepare rice according to directions on box and set aside.
2. In a large bowl, mix the beef, pork, rice, onion, garlic, onion powder, garlic powder, salt and pepper. Set aside.
3. Fill a large stock pot halfway with water and set to high heat. Cut the core out of the cabbage with a paring knife and place in the pot. As water heats, leaves will soften. Peel them off at the rib using tongs and set aside on paper towels to dry. Take care not to rip leaves while removing.
4. Preheat oven to 325°F.
5. Mix the diced tomatoes and tomato sauce in a bowl. Add pinch of salt and pepper and stir.
6. Spread about 1 cup of the tomato sauce mixture along the bottom of a large glass baking dish.
7. Roll the golumpki by holding a cabbage leaf, concave side up with the stem facing you, and placing a large spoonful of the raw meat mixture at the stem end. Roll cabbage forward, folding in the sides, and placing on baking dish with the seam down. Repeat until all cabbage leaves are filled with meat mixture and baking dish is full. Ensure golumpki fit snugly into dish.
8. Cover cabbage rolls evenly with sauerkraut and pour remaining tomato sauce mixture over top.
9. Add chicken broth to baking dish, ensuring it is spread evenly across bottom.
10. Cover baking dish tightly with aluminum foil and bake for 2-3 hours. The key is to cook this dish slowly.

Servings: 4-6



CATEGORY

C

(1 meal every 4 weeks)

Chimichurri Steak Lettuce Wraps with Cilantro Yogurt Sauce

Yes, this is as awesome as it sounds. And yes, it's even *simple* to prepare and cook! Especially if you have the time to plan ahead and allow the marinade and sauce to sit in the fridge overnight.

Chimichurri Sauce

2 cups unpacked fresh flat-leaf parsley, chopped (include stems; about 1/4 cup after chopping)
1 cup unpacked fresh cilantro, minced (include stems; about 2 tablespoons after mincing)
6 garlic cloves, peeled and minced
1/3 cup red wine vinegar
1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
2 teaspoons sea salt
1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Cilantro Yogurt Sauce

1½ cups plain whole milk yogurt
1/2 small red onion, finely chopped
2 cups fresh cilantro, chopped (include stems)
2 tablespoons fresh mint, chopped
1/4 teaspoon ground coriander
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice, more to taste
1 pinch sea salt, more to taste
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Steak Wraps

1-1½ pound grass-fed skirt steak
1 head romaine lettuce, rinsed and separated into whole leaves

Instructions

1. For chimichurri sauce, whisk together all ingredients in a bowl (or puree in a food processor to avoid chopping). Makes about 1 cup.
2. For cilantro yogurt sauce, combine onion, cilantro, yogurt, mint, coriander, and lemon juice in a bowl. Season sauce with salt, pepper, and more lemon juice if desired. Cover and refrigerate overnight or at least 2 hours before using.
3. Pour chimichurri sauce into watertight zip top gallon bag and add raw, whole steak. Squeeze out air and seal. Refrigerate overnight or at least 2 hours before using. Rotate bag in fridge every now and then so marinade covers all meat.

4. Once ready to cook, remove bag of marinated steak from fridge and bring to room temperature on counter (about 1 hour).
5. Preheat grill on medium/medium-low heat to 400°F.
6. Sear steak for 2 minutes each side with grill lid closed. Flip steak using tongs and sear for 2 more minutes with lid closed (flip steak only ONCE).
7. Remove steak from grill and allow to rest on cutting board for 5-10 minutes. Steak will be medium; adjust accordingly for more or less doneness.
8. Slice steak into 3-inch wide portions along grain (along length of steak). Turn each chunk 90 degrees and slice into 1/2" strips against the grain and on the bias (knife tilted 45 degrees toward yourself while cutting).
9. Arrange lettuce leaves on plate and top with steak and cilantro yogurt sauce. Include additional sauce for dipping.

Servings: 4 (appetizer), 2 (meal)

Notes:

1. Chimichurri sauce is great as a condiment, but for this recipe it will be used as a marinade to marinate the steak. If using as a marinade for any other dish, cover and refrigerate overnight or at least 2 hours prior to cooking. If used as a sauce, bring to room temperature before serving.
2. One bunch cilantro from the grocery store will be enough for the entire recipe.
3. If you can't find skirt steak, flank steak or flat iron steak will also work well.



Bruschetta

Bruschetta is a traditional Italian antipasto that is a delicious starter for just about any dinner. It may take a few attempts to perfect this appetizer, but once you do you'll want to make it all the time. And that's where the trouble comes in! Wheat flour should only be eaten as a treat so be sure to appreciate it whenever you have it.

Seasoned Oil

- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 1 pinch sea salt
- 1/4 teaspoon cracked black pepper

Italian Diced Tomatoes

- 4 plum tomatoes, halved and seeded
- 1/4 of 1 red onion, peeled and diced
- 4 cloves fresh garlic, peeled and minced
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/4 teaspoon sea salt, adjust to taste
- 1/4 teaspoon cracked black pepper, adjust to taste

Bruschetta

- 1 baguette or crusty long loaf bread, sliced on the bias (45-degree angle), 18-24 pieces about 1/2" thick
- 10 leaves fresh basil, chiffonade

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Lay bread slices alongside one another on an ungreased cookie sheet.
3. Chop tomatoes and add to small bowl along with onion, garlic, oregano, salt and pepper. Mix with spoon, cover and refrigerate at least 1 hour before assembling bruschetta.
4. Combine all ingredients for seasoned oil in a separate small bowl. Mix well. Apply liberally to top side of bread with pastry brush.
5. Spoon tomato mixture atop each slice of bread. Bake for 10 minutes or until bread is crisp and begins to turn golden brown.
6. Remove bruschetta from oven and garnish with fresh basil. Serve family style on a platter.

Servings: 4-8

Notes:

1. A chiffonade is shredded or finely cut leaf vegetables, usually used as a garnish. Stack basil leaves, roll tightly into a log and slice thinly into confetti-like strips.
2. Bruschetta can also be topped with a light layer of mozzarella or goat cheese during final 2 minutes in oven. Slightly less healthy but more delicious, and not too terrible if you're sticking to a once-a-month treat meal.



Chicken Souvlaki

This traditional Greek sandwich is probably one of the best things you'll ever put in your mouth. It's probably not fair it's relegated to the once-a-month category because most of its ingredients are healthy. But I wouldn't recommend eating wheat (flat bread) and dairy (yogurt, feta cheese) up to three times a week, and this is so good you'd probably want to.

Souvlaki consists of small pieces of marinated meat – chicken, pork, lamb or even fish – served on a skewer or in a pita or wrap. This recipe uses chicken and Greek flat bread and is delicious and easy to prepare.

You won't even have to do any final assembly to serve dinner if you don't want to. Just prepare all the ingredients and lay them out family style and let your guests make their own wraps.

Marinade

- 3/4 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Juice of 1/2 lemon
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 pinch sea salt
- 1 pinch cracked black pepper

Tzatziki Sauce

- 4 cups greek yogurt (I prefer Fage Total 2%)
- 6 cloves fresh garlic, minced
- 1 medium cucumber, seeded and shredded
- Juice of 1/2 lemon
- 2 teaspoons red wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 4 tablespoons chopped fresh dill
- 4 teaspoons sea salt, adjust to taste
- 2 teaspoons cracked black pepper, adjust to taste

Chicken Souvlaki

- 4 large chicken breasts, cubed
- 8 greek flat bread rounds
- 3 cups iceberg lettuce, shredded
- 8 ounces feta cheese, crumbled
- 1 tomato, sliced
- 2 tablespoons olive oil or coconut oil, more to brush flat bread
- Aluminum foil, for wrapping

Instructions

1. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together all ingredients for marinade. Add cubed chicken, coating it well with marinade. Cover with lid or plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least two hours.
2. Combine ingredients for tzatziki sauce in a glass mixing bowl and refrigerate, covered with lid or plastic wrap, for at least one hour prior to serving. Remove from fridge a half-hour before serving.
3. Fold 8 12"x12" sheets of aluminum foil in half (to form a 6"x12" rectangle) before cooking and set aside for later use when assembling souvlaki.
4. Bring a large frying pan to medium heat and add oil. Drain chicken of marinade and cook 8-10 minutes, or until fully cooked. Place in a clean bowl and set aside.
5. Bring a nonstick skillet to low heat. Brush flat bread lightly on one side with olive oil, and place it in the pan oiled side down and heat for 1 minute. Brush the top side with oil and flip, heating this side 1 minute as well. Be careful when removing because they'll be hot.
6. As each piece of flat bread finishes cooking, place it on foil and add chicken, tzatziki sauce, feta, lettuce and tomato. Fold sandwich in half and wrap with foil so at least half of it is secured.

Servings: 8

Notes:

1. Prepare the tzatziki sauce one day before you wish to serve it. Refrigerating overnight and allowing the flavors to meld produces the best results.
2. Move this recipe to **CATEGORY B** by substituting the wheat flour flat bread rounds with homemade Taco Shells (p. xxx).



Wheat flour flat bread (CATEGORY C)



Almond flour taco shells (CATEGORY B)

Corned Beef Reuben

You could probably open a sandwich shop once you get this recipe down.

Russian Dressing

1/2 cup organic Hellman's mayonnaise
6 tablespoons ketchup
1/4 cup chopped sweet gherkin pickles (about 6 pickles)
3 tablespoons Texas Pete chili sauce
1 dash red wine vinegar
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1 pinch sea salt
1/4 teaspoon cracked black pepper

Reuben

1 pound corned beef
8 slices rye bread
1/2 pound Swiss cheese
1½ cups sauerkraut
4 tablespoons grass-fed butter, softened, more as needed

Instructions

1. Prepare Reuben dressing by mixing all ingredients thoroughly in a small bowl. Taste for seasoning and adjust if necessary. Refrigerate until ready to assemble sandwiches.
2. Preheat a griddle to 350°F or a non-stick frying pan to medium-low heat.
3. Butter rye bread as you would for a grilled cheese sandwich, one side of each slice. If you are using a griddle (recommended), prepare 4 sandwiches at one time. However, if you're using a frying pan, cook one or two at a time.
4. Place one slice of rye bread, buttered side down, on heated surface. Add one slice of cheese to bread, followed by 2-3 slices corned beef. Apply about 1 tablespoon Russian dressing to corned beef and add a good pinch of sauerkraut. Place more corned beef on top of sauerkraut and top with more dressing then another slice of cheese. You get the idea.
5. Place second slice of bread, buttered side up, atop sandwich and let cook for 3-5 minutes, or until bottom side is golden brown. Carefully turn sandwich to opposite side and cook for another 3-5 minutes.
6. Serve with a side of plantain chips or fresh veggies.

Servings: 4

Bleu Burger Man-Salad with Balsamic Vinaigrette

I bet you didn't see this one coming.

The sweetness of this balsamic vinaigrette is a fantastic complement to the hearty beef patty and tangy bite of the gorgonzola cheese.

And don't worry, guys. This is a big boy salad if ever there was one. Yes, that's a fried egg on top. Grab your colander and rinse that lettuce with pride.

Balsamic Vinaigrette

- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 clove garlic, peeled
- 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 3 tablespoons honey
- 1 pinch sea salt
- 1 pinch ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil

Bleu Burger Salad

- 1 pound grass-fed ground beef (80/20), leaner if preferred
- 1 red bell pepper, quartered
- 1 head red leaf lettuce, rinsed and torn
- 4 large strawberries, sliced lengthwise
- 1 plum tomato, sliced widthwise
- 1/4 of 1 red onion, thinly sliced
- 4 ounces gorgonzola cheese
- 2 eggs
- Sea salt, to taste
- Ground black pepper, to taste
- Olive oil, to cook

Instructions

1. For vinaigrette, add all ingredients except oil to blender and blast away until smooth. Slowly drizzle olive oil while blending until dressing reaches desired consistency. Refrigerate at least 30 minutes prior to using.
2. Preheat grill to 400°F using medium/medium low heat.
3. Place red bell pepper quarters skin side down on grill over direct flame. Roast until skin is charred, then flip (about 10-12 minutes total).
4. While peppers roast, add lettuce, onion, strawberries and tomato to large mixing bowl. Toss to combine.

5. Remove peppers from grill and place immediately in paper bag. Fold shut for a few minutes, then remove peppers and peel skin. Slice into thin strips and set aside.
6. Form ground beef into 4 patties and season on both sides with salt and pepper. Grill to desired doneness. Two minutes before done, add roasted peppers and gorgonzola cheese equally between patties and close grill lid. Remove once cheese has just started to melt and allow patties to rest for 5 minutes.
7. Heat small nonstick frying pan to medium low heat. Add quarter-size drop of oil to pan and fry eggs, one at a time, seasoning with salt and pepper. Do not break yolks.
8. To serve, divide salad between two plates and top with 2 bleu burger patties each, then add 1 egg to each set of patties. Drizzle balsamic vinaigrette over salad as desired and serve.

Servings: 2 entrees, 4 side salads



Skirt Steak Lettuce Tacos

(coming soon)



Bison Burger Spinach Salad with Sweet Potato Fries

(coming soon)



Grilled Bleu Cheese Chicken Quesadilla

This is one of my favorite recipes of all time. It's a healthier version of my original and tastes *almost* as good even though for the bleu cheese sauce I substitute mayonnaise and heavy cream with greek yogurt and coconut milk, respectively. In fact, I may even try replacing the sour cream with greek yogurt as well and see how it turns out. I'm betting it will still be pretty good.

One of my primary goals for this cookbook is to prove to people that healthy food can taste just as good as or even better than junk food. However, I have to admit that it's sometimes painful to share healthier alternatives on those rare occasions when the less healthy versions taste even better.

As a cook, sometimes I feel like I just want to show off by putting flavor over nutrition. If it wasn't for all the preservatives that are added to processed flour tortilla shells to ensure shelf life, I'd probably eat them more often than I do. So this recipe calls only for natural, preservative-free flour tortillas.

Aside from the tortilla shells, the bleu cheese sauce is the only component that's not too good for you but as I said this is the healthier version of my original, which is the best bleu cheese sauce/dip/dressing I've ever tasted. Therefore, I've included in the notes the original ingredient substitutes in the event you want to get the full flavor experience.

Bleu Cheese Sauce

- 1 cup sour cream
- 1/2 cup greek yogurt (I prefer Fage Total 2%)
- 8 ounces gorgonzola cheese, crumbled (about 1½ cups)
- 1/4 cup full fat coconut milk
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh dill
- 1 teaspoon red wine vinegar
- 1/4 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon celery seed
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt, adjust to taste
- 1 teaspoon fine ground black pepper

Chicken Quesadillas

- 2 pounds chicken breasts (2-3 average size breasts), grilled and cubed
- 6-8 flour tortilla shells (use only natural, preservative-free)
- Extra virgin olive oil to cook (if not using a grill grate skillet)
- 1 small red onion, small dice
- 2 cups shredded iceberg lettuce
- 2 cups red grapes, halved

Instructions

1. Combine all ingredients for bleu cheese sauce in a bowl and refrigerate at least two hours before serving.
2. Set grill grate skillet or nonstick skillet to medium low heat. Assemble quesadillas by placing tortilla shell in pan and spreading 2 tablespoons bleu cheese across one half. To same side add cubed chicken, lettuce and grapes. Fold bare side over to form half-moon.
3. Flip quesadilla on opposite side and grill for 1 minute longer.
4. Repeat with the remainder of the tortilla shells and filling.

Yield: 6-8 quesadillas

Notes:

1. This bleu cheese sauce can also be used as a dip for chicken wings and veggies.
2. Add 1/2 cup buttermilk to bleu cheese sauce to use as a salad dressing.
3. Bleu cheese sauce is the primary reason this recipe is best suited for **CATEGORY C**, as there's no way I would advise eating it up to three times per week due to the dairy content alone. However, if you want to make it taste *even better*, substitute the greek yogurt with organic Hellman's mayonnaise and the coconut milk with heavy cream.
4. If you'd prefer to go even healthier, substitute sour cream with greek yogurt. The flavor will practically be the same.
5. If you'd like to go healthier still, make homemade tortilla shells using the Taco Shells recipe (p.xxx), which is reprinted below for convenience. (In the event of a tree nut allergy, substitute almond flour with coconut flour and add an extra cup of coconut milk.)

Tortilla (Taco) Shells

1/2 cup almond flour
1/2 cup tapioca flour
1 cup full fat coconut milk
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1 pinch sea salt
Extra virgin coconut or olive oil, to cook

Instructions

1. Mix tortilla shell ingredients together in a medium size bowl until fully combined. Add 1 teaspoon coconut or olive oil to skillet set to medium heat.
2. Using a ladle or small measuring cup, pour batter into skillet to make 5- to 6-inch rounds one at a time. Cook 2 minutes on first side then flip and cook an additional 1-2 minutes. Remove and set aside to cool on baking rack, repeating until batter is gone.



Szechuan Beef Satay

Satay consists of marinated meat that is skewered, grilled and served with a sauce. This dish with Asian-American flair combines heat and sweet, and it's also fun to eat.

Szechuan Marinade/Dipping Sauce

- 1/3 cup low sodium soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 2 tablespoons white wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon raw honey
- 1 teaspoon wasabi paste
- 1 scallion, rough chop
- 2 shavings fresh ginger
- 1 garlic clove, smashed
- Juice of 1/2 lime
- 1½ teaspoons arrowroot powder
- 1½ teaspoons water, more as needed

Beef Satay

- 1 (2-pound) flank steak
- 1/4 cup sesame seeds, toasted
- Cracked black pepper, to taste
- 1 scallion (green onion), small chop
- 1 bag wooden skewers (20 count minimum)
- 2 cups water

Instructions

1. Place flank steak onto large plate or sheet pan and season lightly with cracked black pepper.
2. Whisk all ingredients for marinade except arrowroot powder and water in mixing bowl. Reserve arrowroot powder and water for dipping sauce.
3. Transfer steak to large zip top plastic bag and add marinade, ensuring steak is fully covered with mixture. Place bag in fridge to marinate steak for at least one hour prior to preparing.
4. One-half hour prior to cooking, add 2 cups water to a shallow pan and soak skewers (to prevent burning on grill).
5. Preheat grill to 400°F and remove flank steak from marinade. Slice steak into 1/4-inch thick slices against the grain and on the bias (i.e., on a 45° angle).
6. Weave each slice of steak onto individual skewers and set aside until sates are complete.
7. To make dipping sauce, strain marinade into saucepan set to medium-high heat. Mix arrowroot powder and water in a separate container to make slurry. Once marinade boils, turn heat to low and whisk in corn starch slurry. Add tap water as necessary if sauce becomes too thick, and remove from heat at desired consistency.

8. Place all sates on grill at once and cook about 2 minutes per side.
9. Remove sates from flame and place in rows along a serving tray, then sprinkle with sesame seeds. Garnish with chopped scallions and serve with dipping sauce.

Servings: 4 (meal), 8 (appetizer)

Note:

1. The Szechuan dipping sauce will thicken VERY quickly once you add the arrowroot powder slurry. Therefore, keep at least a tablespoon of water on hand to add to sauce if you need to thin it. And don't worry if you thin it too much by accident; in this case just put it back on the heat to thicken it back up.
2. To toast sesame seeds, set a skillet to medium heat and add seeds (do not add any oil, as the seeds will begin to release theirs). Swirl pan and toss seeds carefully for 3-5 minutes, or until seeds begin to turn brown. Remove sesame seeds from pan and set aside in a small bowl until ready to use.

T-Rev's Original Chili with Beans

This is the chili recipe that I used when I won People's Choice Chili at the World's Championship Chili Cookoff in 2009. Even though most people don't usually eat chili every week, this recipe appears in **CATEGORY B** because I don't advocate eating beef three days a week.

If you want to move this to **CATEGORY B**, simply substitute the beef with turkey. You'll barely be able to tell the difference anyway.

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 large yellow onion, diced
1 large bell pepper (your choice of color), diced
1 pinch salt
1½ pounds ground chuck (substitute ground turkey)
1/2 teaspoon sea salt
1 (14½ ounce) can diced tomatoes
1 (29 ounce) can crushed tomatoes
2 cloves garlic, minced
1½ teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
1/2 cup (about 1/2 bottle) T-Rev's Original Chili Spice Mix
1 (16 ounce) can pinto beans, drained and rinsed
1 (16 ounce) can black beans, drained and rinsed
1 teaspoon sea salt
1 cup low sodium chicken broth (optional)

Instructions

1. Add oil to stockpot set to low heat and sweat onion and bell pepper with a pinch of salt until soft.
2. Turn heat to medium high/high and brown meat, continually stirring to cook evenly. Add 1/2 teaspoon sea salt.
3. Add diced tomatoes and crushed tomatoes and bring to simmer. Add garlic, Worcestershire and chili spice mix. Stir thoroughly, then add beans and 1 teaspoon salt and reduce to low heat. Cover pot and simmer for 2 hours, stirring regularly.
4. Remove from heat and add chicken broth (if using). Taste for salt and allow chili to sit covered for 30 minutes before serving.

Notes:

1. You may substitute T-Rev's Original Texas Chili Mix, but please note that the Texas Chili blend contains salt and likely will eliminate the need to add additional salt to the recipe after adding a pinch to the onion and bell pepper.

2. If you don't have T-Rev's Original Chili Spice Mix, shame on you, but simply substitute our chili mix with Mexican chili powder. But you're on your own when it comes to figuring out how much black pepper, garlic powder, onion powder and cumin to add!
3. I used a yellow and orange bell pepper for this recipe and made a double batch. I also used ground turkey, as I don't eat red meat very much and you really can't tell it isn't ground beef anyhow.
4. Feel free to use this recipe to win your office chili cook-off!

Yield: about 3 quarts



Skirt Steak Stir-Fry

(coming soon)



Asian Skirt Steak Salad with Sesame Ginger Vinaigrette

If you don't have all the ingredients for this salad on hand, just go to the grocery store right now and get them. This will be the best thing you eat all week.

Sesame Ginger Vinaigrette

- 1 clove garlic, peeled
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 2 tablespoons white wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 1 teaspoon low sodium soy sauce
- 1/4 teaspoon sesame oil
- 3 tablespoons honey
- 1-inch knob fresh ginger, peeled and sliced
- 1 pinch sea salt
- 1 pinch ground black pepper
- 3/4 cup olive oil

I can't believe I just gave away this recipe. That's how much I love you.

Asian Skirt Steak Salad

- 1 pound skirt steak
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 2-3 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 head green leaf lettuce, rinsed, dried and chopped
- 2 cups fresh pineapple, cubed
- 1/2 of 1 red bell pepper, julienne
- 1/4 of one red onion, julienne
- 1/4 cup fresh parmesan cheese, shaved
- 1 pinch sea salt
- 1 pinch ground black pepper
- Sesame seeds, to taste

Instructions

1. For vinaigrette, combine all ingredients in blender except for olive oil and blend until smooth. Slowly drizzle oil through blender cap and mix until dressing reaches desired consistency. Refrigerate at least 30 minutes before serving.
2. Preheat grill to 400°F (or medium heat if no thermometer).

3. Rub skirt steak with a thin layer of olive oil and season with salt, pepper, and garlic powder. Set aside.
4. Combine all other (salad) ingredients except sesame seeds in a large mixing bowl and set aside (refrigerate if doing so more than 15 minutes prior to grilling steak).
5. Grill steak for 2-3 minutes each side, turning only once (steak should be medium/medium rare). Remove from grill and allow to rest for 5 minutes.
6. Cut steak into 3-inch sections, then turn each section 90 degrees and cut on the bias against the grain into thin slices.
7. Plate salad mixture and top with steak, dressing, and sesame seeds.

Servings: 2 entrees, 4 side salads



New York Style Pizza

(coming soon)



JUST

for

KIDS

If there's one thing parents have most in common with one another, it's probably our near-universal struggle to get our kids to eat their meals without complaining about the food on their plate. Unless it's pizza, hot dogs or a pile of chicken nuggets, they usually want little to do with it.

Even if you're like me and you want your kids to try a variety of healthy alternatives to the standard fare of junk they're so often exposed to at school, birthday parties or Grandma's house, sometimes you just don't have the energy to battle them all the time. So on those occasions when you realize it's easier to join 'em if you can't beat 'em, I've at least provided much healthier alternatives to their store-bought favorites.

And even though I think the kiddos will enjoy many of the recipes in this cookbook, I've tried to offer some fun, unique twists on everyday ingredients that shouldn't be too difficult to whip up into separate dishes for them whenever you think they may not like whatever you have on tap for the rest of the family.

This section is intended to make it easier for you to track down recipes you think your kids will enjoy, as it certainly beats forcing you to scour through an entire book to find a particular recipe.

Meal recipes unique to this section will be printed in full, while those that appear in other sections will simply be referenced by title and page number so you can find them easily. For instance, the kids love the chicken nuggets recipe in CATEGORY B; there's no need to print it twice.

And notice I said *meal* recipes. I haven't bothered to list any recipes from SNACKS and TREATS; they'll love most of those so you can just go right to that section to find what you need.

Finally, these recipes are not organized into breakfast, lunch and dinner; they're basically just part of a pick list. If your kids are anything like mine, they'd eat breakfast every night for dinner if I'd let them (and every now and then that's exactly what we do). So whenever I come up with healthy meals my kids like, I never really worry about what time of day it is when they're eating them!

Pig in a Blanket



A grass-fed beef dog all wrapped up in farm-raised eggs omelet-style makes for a healthy and easy dinner the kids will love. Serve with a side of fruits and veggies of your choice.

Resist the urge to give in to their demands for ketchup as long as possible, but if you're feeling charitable at least serve the delicious (if not altogether nutritious) homemade ketchup on [p. xxx](#).

The Triple “Play”te

Meat, veggies and fruit. Arrange a sampling of your kids’ favorites and you’ve got dinner ready for them in under 10 minutes. Just be sure to use deli meats that are nitrate- and nitrite-free, such as Applegate Farms.



Peanut Butter Apple Sandwich (p. xxx)

Better (For You) Than Chick-fil-A Nuggets (p. xxx)

New York Style Pizza (p. xxx)

DRAFT

Parmesan Crusted Chicken Tenders

(coming soon)

Salisbury Steak

(coming soon)

Scrambled Eggs & Home Fries

(coming soon)



Pizza Omelet

(coming soon)



SNACKS
and
TREATS

Greek Yogurt Fruit Smoothie

Homemade fruit smoothies are almost always a healthier option to the ones you find at the kiosk in the mall that are often made with sugary juices and other additives. Every now and then you'll probably want a break from the green variety, so this is a fantastic way to treat yourself while simultaneously sticking to healthy ingredients. But no more than once a week.

- 1/2 cup coconut milk
- 1 cup greek yogurt (I prefer Fage Total 2%)
- 1 cup whole strawberries, caps on
- 1/2 banana
- 1/2 cup blueberries
- 2-4 tablespoons flax or chia seed
- 1 cup ice (optional)

Instructions

1. Add coconut milk and yogurt to blender and blend until smooth.
2. Slowly add fruit until mixture is smooth.
3. Add flax or chia seeds and ice, and blend until smooth.

Yield: about 24 ounces

Note:

Pour mixture into popsicle molds and freeze for use as healthy snacks for the kids. Or yourself.



Frozen Yogurt Berry Pops

Easy, healthy and awesome. Perfect alternative to coconut milk smoothies for anyone with a coconut allergy.

- 1/4 cup low fat buttermilk
- 1 cup greek yogurt (I prefer Fage Total 2%)
- 1 cup whole strawberries, caps on
- 1 banana
- 1/2 cup blueberries
- 2 tablespoons raw honey

Instructions

1. Add buttermilk, yogurt, fruit and honey to blender.
2. Blend on high until smooth and fill popsicle molds. Freeze and serve.

Yield: 24 ounces or 6 (4-ounce) popsicle molds



Strawberry Banana Greek Yogurt Smoothie

- 1 cup full fat coconut milk
- 6 ounces greek yogurt (I prefer Fage Total 2%)
- 2 cups whole strawberries, caps on
- 1 large banana
- 2 tablespoons flaxseed

Instructions

1. Add coconut milk and yogurt to blender and blend until smooth.
2. Slowly add fruit until mixture is smooth.
3. Add flax or chia seeds and ice, and blend until smooth.

Servings: about 3 cups

Chocolate Strawberry Granola Pops

- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 cup greek yogurt (I prefer Fage Total 2%)
- 2 cups whole strawberries (about 8 large strawberries)
- 1 cup blueberries
- 2 tablespoons cocoa powder
- 2 tablespoons flaxseed
- 2 tablespoons organic raw honey
- 1/2 cup low-sugar granola

Instructions

1. Add lemon, yogurt, strawberries and blueberries to blender and blend until smooth.
2. Add cocoa powder, honey, and flax seed and blend.
3. With blender off and unplugged, stir in granola.
4. Pour mixture into popsicle molds and freeze for at least 8 hours.

Servings: 4-6 pops, depending on mold size (about 24 ounces)

Note:

Alternatively, put mixture into ice cream maker for 20-25 minutes for soft serve frozen yogurt.

Piña Colada Pops

- 1½ cups spinach or kale
- ¾ cup full fat coconut milk
- 2½ cups fresh pineapple, cubed
- 2 tablespoons organic unsweetened flake coconut

Instructions

1. Add all ingredients to blender and blend on high speed until smooth.
2. Pour mixture into popsicle molds.
3. Place in freezer overnight or at least four hours before serving.

Servings: 4-6 pops, depending on mold size (about 24 ounces)

DRAFT

Almond Butter Energy Bites

- 1 cup rolled oats
- 1 cup unsweetened coconut flakes
- 1/4 cup chia seeds (substitute hulled raw hemp seeds or hulled sunflower seeds)
- 1/4 cup ground flax seed
- 1/4 teaspoon sea salt
- 2/3 cup smooth almond butter
- 2 tablespoons chopped raw almonds
- 1/4 cup honey
- 1/4 cup miniature chocolate chips

Instructions

1. Line a large, rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper and set it aside.
2. In a large bowl, place the oats, coconut flakes, hemp seeds and salt, and mix to combine well. Set the bowl aside.
3. In a separate large, microwave-safe bowl, add the almond (or peanut) butter and honey and mix to combine. Microwave mixture for 30 seconds to soften and make it easier to combine with the dry ingredients.
4. Add the oat and coconut dry mixture to the almond butter and honey mixture, and mix until well-combined. Allow the mixture to cool for at least 5 minutes, and then add the miniature chocolate chips. Mix until the chips are evenly distributed throughout. If you add the chips when the mixture is hot, the chips will melt.
5. Using a tablespoon, scoop the mixture by the heaping tablespoon onto the prepared baking sheet. You should have 10-12 portions. Roll each portion tightly into a ball between your palms. Place the baking sheet in the refrigerator to chill until firm. Serve chilled.

Note:

Substitute peanut butter if allergic to tree nuts.

Plantain Chips & Salsa

This is a tremendously healthy snack that satisfies your need for a crunchy chip and looks out for your waistline and heart in the process.

Plantains

- 2 large green plantains, thinly sliced on bias (angle)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Sea salt, to taste

Mexican Restaurant Salsa

- 1-2 serrano or jalapeno chiles (1 for medium heat, 2 for hot)
- 1 small yellow onion
- 1 clove garlic
- 6 whole peeled tomatoes, rinsed (from a can)
- 1 cup tomato sauce
- 8 stalks cilantro (stems included)
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt
- 2 teaspoons fine ground black pepper
- 1 cup water
- Juice 1/2 lemon

Instructions

1. Add all ingredients but water to the bowl of a food processor and puree for at least 30 seconds, scraping the sides of the bowl as necessary. Add water and puree until smooth. Refrigerate at least 1 hour prior to serving.
2. Preheat oven to 325°F.
3. Toss sliced plantains in medium size bowl and add salt to taste.
4. Arrange plantain slices on baking sheet lined with parchment paper or silicon liner.
5. Bake plantain slices for 40 minutes or until golden brown.
6. Remove from oven and allow to cool for 10 minutes.
7. Serve with salsa and enjoy.



Rex's Banana Bread

My younger son is allergic to tree nuts, so that pretty much means we're all allergic to tree nuts. And relegated to eating baked goods without nuts.

Sigh.

But I guess that's better than sending your kid into anaphylactic shock.

And, hey, this way he ends up getting a recipe named after him. So if you're allergic to tree nuts or you just prefer your brownies and breads nut-free, you'll love this recipe. I prefer to go fairly light on the honey because I really want this to be considered healthy instead of just "healthier," so adding a little more honey or maple syrup to taste certainly shouldn't be the end of the world.

Most importantly, being able to give your kids this guilt-free snack should eliminate any temptation to buy them cellophane-wrapped brownies, donuts or cupcakes ever again.

4 very ripe bananas
2 eggs
1 cup unsweetened apple sauce
2 teaspoons cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon sea salt
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/4 cup honey (substitute pure organic maple syrup)
1/4 cup olive oil, more to grease loaf pan
1 cup oat flour
1 cup sprouted wheat flour

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Combine bananas, eggs, apple sauce, cinnamon, salt, baking powder, baking soda, vanilla extract, honey and olive oil in stand mixer bowl. Using paddle attachment, begin mixing ingredients on lowest setting until combined. Increase paddle speed to next highest setting until eggs are beaten and bananas are mashed but not smooth.
3. Turn mixer to lowest speed and slowly add flours to bowl until incorporated. Turn off mixer in order to scrape bowl if necessary. Mix for an additional 10-15 seconds or until batter is smooth.
4. Grease a loaf pan with olive oil and add batter. Jiggle pan to ensure batter is evenly distributed.
5. Place pan in oven to bake for 55-65 minutes or until toothpick inserted into center of bread comes out dry.
6. Remove from oven and cool for at least 1 hour before attempting to remove from loaf pan.

7. Using a thin, sharp knife inserted between bread and loaf pan, slice around outer edge of banana bread to loosen it from pan. Turn pan upside down on serving plate and shake gently until bread slides out.
8. Serve warm or cold. Refrigerating allows for easier slicing.



Nutty Banana Bread

Nuts.

3 very ripe bananas
3 eggs
1 cup unsweetened apple sauce
2 teaspoons cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon sea salt
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/4 cup honey (substitute pure organic maple syrup)
1/4 cup melted grass-fed butter, more to grease loaf pan (substitute olive oil or coconut oil)
1/2 cup almond butter
1/2 cup coconut flour
1/2 cup almond flour
1/2 cup chopped almonds or walnuts

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Combine bananas, eggs, apple sauce, cinnamon, salt, baking powder, baking soda, vanilla extract, honey and butter in stand mixer bowl. Using paddle attachment, begin mixing ingredients on lowest setting until combined. Increase paddle speed to next highest setting until eggs are beaten and bananas are mashed but not smooth.
3. Turn mixer to lowest speed and slowly add flours to bowl until incorporated. Turn off mixer in order to scrape bowl if necessary. Mix for an additional 10-15 seconds or until batter is smooth, adding chopped nuts and mixing just enough to incorporate.
4. Grease a loaf pan with butter or olive oil and add batter. Jiggle pan to ensure batter is evenly distributed.
5. Place pan in oven to bake for 50-60 minutes or until top of bread starts to brown and toothpick inserted into center of bread comes out dry.
6. Remove from oven and cool for at least 1 hour before attempting to remove from loaf pan.
7. Using a thin, sharp knife inserted between bread and loaf pan, slice around outer edge of banana bread to loosen it from pan. Turn pan upside down on serving plate and shake gently until bread slides out.
8. Serve warm or cold. Refrigerating allows for easier slicing.

Note:

I prefer to make my own applesauce. If you've got a powerful enough blender, quartering two apples (I prefer Gala, Red Delicious or Honey Crisp) and blending on high speed with 2 tablespoons of water yields between 1 and 1¼ cups applesauce.



DR

Blueberry Banana Bread

The greek yogurt in this recipe really give this bread a moist, cakey texture that sets it apart from the others.

- 3 very ripe bananas
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup unsweetened apple sauce
- 1/2 cup greek yogurt (I prefer Fage 2%)
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup honey (substitute pure organic maple syrup)
- 1/4 cup melted grass-fed butter, more to grease loaf pan (substitute olive oil or coconut oil)
- 1/2 cup almond butter
- 1/2 cup coconut flour
- 1/2 cup almond flour
- 1/2 cup chopped almonds or walnuts
- 1 cup blueberries
- 1 tablespoon rolled oats

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Combine bananas, eggs, apple sauce, yogurt, cinnamon, salt, baking powder, baking soda, vanilla extract, honey and butter in stand mixer bowl. Using paddle attachment, begin mixing ingredients on lowest setting until combined. Increase paddle speed to next highest setting until eggs are beaten and bananas are mashed but not smooth.
3. Turn mixer to lowest speed and slowly add flours to bowl until incorporated. Turn off mixer in order to scrape bowl if necessary. Mix for an additional 10-15 seconds or until batter is smooth, adding chopped nuts and blueberries and mixing just enough to incorporate.
4. Grease a loaf pan with butter or olive oil and add batter. Jiggle pan to ensure batter is evenly distributed.
5. Sprinkle rolled oats evenly over top of batter.
6. Place pan in oven to bake for 50-60 minutes or until top of bread starts to brown and toothpick inserted into center of bread comes out dry.
7. Remove from oven and cool for at least 1 hour before attempting to remove from loaf pan.
8. Using a thin, sharp knife inserted between bread and loaf pan, slice around outer edge of banana bread to loosen it from pan. Turn pan upside down on serving plate and shake gently until bread slides out.
9. Serve warm or cold. Refrigerating allows for easier slicing.



Notes:

1. Substitute blueberries with any berry of preference. The photo below depicts a delicious Raspberry Banana Nut Bread recipe that was made using the same ingredients as its blueberry counterpart, minus the rolled oats sprinkled on top.
2. You can use parchment paper instead of oils to line baking dish. To do so, simply cut a piece of parchment paper in the same shape as your dish, leaving a 1" overlap on all sides. Using a pair of scissors, make a 2" cut at a 45-degree angle at each corner. Fit the parchment paper into baking dish so all corners overlap, then fill with batter.



Pumpkin Bread

Sometimes I really hate telling people these recipes are healthy. The conventional wisdom seems to be that healthy food doesn't (and can't) taste as good as less healthy options do, and therefore I feel like I'm doing an automatic disservice to my food. But this pumpkin bread recipe not only has out-of-this-world flavor, it tastes much more like cake than bread.

Pure pumpkin is a very healthy food and it's a shame it's largely relegated to Thanksgiving meals. Bake this healthy alternative to the standard pumpkin pie and watch your family tear it up.

- 2 eggs, yolks and whites separated
- 1 cup pure pumpkin (100% pure)
- 1 ripe banana (about 1/2 cup mashed)
- 1/3 cup extra virgin coconut oil or grass-fed butter, melted
- 2 tablespoons raw honey
- 1½ cups full fat coconut milk
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup organic granulated cane sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- 1 cup finely ground almond flour
- 1 cup coconut flour
- 1/2 cup dark chocolate chips

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Using a hand mixer or whisk attachment, whip egg whites until foamy and stiff. Set aside.
3. In a stand mixer bowl, combine all ingredients except coconut flour, almond flour and chocolate chips. Using paddle attachment, begin mixing ingredients on lowest setting until combined. Increase paddle speed to next highest setting until eggs are beaten and bananas are mashed but not smooth.
4. Turn mixer to lowest speed and slowly add flours to bowl until incorporated. Turn off mixer in order to scrape bowl if necessary. Mix for an additional 10-15 seconds or until batter is smooth.
5. Using a flat rubber spatula, gently fold in whipped egg whites and chocolate chips.
6. Grease a loaf pan with butter or olive oil (or line with parchment paper) and add batter. Jiggle pan to ensure batter is evenly distributed.
7. Place pan in oven to bake for 50-60 minutes or until top of bread starts to brown and toothpick inserted into center of bread comes out dry.
8. Remove from oven and cool for at least 1 hour before removing from loaf pan.

9. Using a thin, sharp knife inserted between bread and loaf pan, slice around outer edge of banana bread to loosen it from pan. Turn pan upside down on serving plate and shake gently until bread slides out. (If you lined loaf pan with parchment, simply lift bread out carefully.)
10. Serve warm or cold. Refrigerating allows for easier slicing.

Notes:

1. You can forgo whipping the egg whites if you choose. This makes for a lighter batter and bread but is not essential. This pumpkin bread will be plenty moist and delicious without whipping the whites; it just sends it to the next level if you do.
2. Because coconut and almond flours inherently make for a lighter, more delicate bread than oat and/or wheat flours do, you might prefer to use parchment paper to line the loaf pan just to eliminate any potential for the bread to break apart when removing it from the pan. If necessary, see notes section on [p. xxx](#) for tips on how to do this.
3. If you'd prefer to cut down on the sugar in this recipe, you can replace 1/2 cup granulated sugar with 2 tablespoons honey. Believe it or not, the difference is noticeable but negligible.



Nut-Free Pumpkin Bread

This recipe calls for oat and wheat flours instead of coconut and almond flours, so it's actually coconut-free in addition to being tree-nut free. Because the jury is still out on whether or not my younger son is allergic to coconut in addition to tree nuts, the coconut milk is also replaced by greek yogurt.

Both of the pumpkin bread recipes in this book are incredible, and I encourage you to make both of them to see which one you prefer more. The best part is that even family members with allergies won't have to sacrifice flavor in order to reap the health benefits of these recipes.

- 2 eggs, yolks and whites separated
- 1 cup pure pumpkin (100% pure)
- 1 ripe banana (about 1/2 cup mashed)
- 1/3 cup melted grass-fed butter
- 2 tablespoons raw honey
- 1 cup greek yogurt (I prefer Fage Total 2%)
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup organic granulated cane sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- 1 cup oat flour
- 1/2 cup sprouted wheat flour
- 1/2 cup dark chocolate chips

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Using a hand mixer or whisk attachment, whip egg whites until foamy and stiff. Set aside.
3. In a stand mixer bowl, combine all ingredients except oat flour, wheat flour and chocolate chips. Using paddle attachment, begin mixing ingredients on lowest setting until combined. Increase paddle speed to next highest setting until eggs are beaten and bananas are mashed but not smooth.
4. Turn mixer to lowest speed and slowly add flours to bowl until incorporated. Turn off mixer in order to scrape bowl if necessary. Mix for an additional 10-15 seconds or until batter is smooth.
5. Using a flat rubber spatula, gently fold in whipped egg whites and chocolate chips.
6. Grease a loaf pan with butter or olive oil (or line with parchment paper) and add batter. Jiggle pan to ensure batter is evenly distributed.
7. Place pan in oven to bake for 50-60 minutes or until top of bread starts to brown and toothpick inserted into center of bread comes out dry.
8. Remove from oven and cool for at least 1 hour before removing from loaf pan.

9. Using a thin, sharp knife inserted between bread and loaf pan, slice around outer edge of banana bread to loosen it from pan. Turn pan upside down on serving plate and shake gently until bread slides out. (If you lined loaf pan with parchment, simply lift bread out carefully.)
10. Serve warm or cold. Refrigerating allows for easier slicing.

Note:

Similar to Pumpkin Bread (p. xxx), it isn't imperative to whip egg whites prior to adding to batter. However, because oat and wheat flours bind with the eggs to form a denser end product than coconut and almond flours do, whipping the whites in this recipe will make a more meaningful difference in producing a lighter bread than if you chose not to do it. Whatever you choose, your family is sure to love this recipe!



Michael's Black Bean Brownies

These brownies aren't great just because they're healthy alternatives to the standard box mixes you'll find at the grocery store. They're great because they're delicious in their own right.

- 1½ cups black beans (about 1 (15-ounce) can), drained and rinsed
- 1 egg
- 2 tablespoons cocoa powder
- 1/2 cup quick oats
- 1/4 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/2 cup organic pure maple syrup
- 1/4 cup coconut or olive oil
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 cup chocolate chips (optional)
- 1/4 cup chopped walnuts (optional)

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Combine all ingredients except chips and nuts in a good food processor and blend until completely smooth.
3. Stir in chocolate chips and nuts, then pour into a greased 8-inch square pan.
4. Bake brownies for 20-24 minutes, or until toothpick inserted into center comes out dry.
5. Cool at least 10 minutes before cutting brownies. Store covered on countertop or in fridge.

Yield: 8-12 brownies

Note:

1. Double the recipe to make a brownie "cake." The brownies will be double in height, about the same thickness as a standard layer of cake. Frost with [Chocolate Avocado Pudding \(p. xxx\)](#).
2. For vegan, omit the egg. It helps bind the ingredients but it isn't a necessity.

Chocolate Avocado Pudding

This is a fantastic, healthy snack for the kids that can be used as a pudding layer for a black bean brownie cake or a treat right out of the bowl. Proportionally increase the recipe as desired.

And by kids I mean all you adult kids too.

- 1 large ripe avocado
- 1/4 cup cocoa powder
- 1/4 cup coconut milk
- 1/4 cup honey
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 small pinch sea salt

Instructions

1. Purée the avocado until smooth using food processor (or by hand with a fork if soft enough).
2. Mix together the cocoa powder and milk until combined and add to the avocado.
3. Add vanilla and honey and mix well.
4. Refrigerate pudding until ready to eat.

Yield: about 3/4 cup

Note:

Use organic pure maple syrup for vegan.



Chocolate Cookies

1/4 cup sifted coconut flour
1/4 cup grass-fed butter or coconut oil
1/3 cup cocoa powder
3 eggs
1/3 cup organic raw honey (substitute organic granulated cane sugar)
1/4 teaspoon sea salt
1/4 teaspoon vanilla

Instructions

1. In a saucepan at low heat, melt butter (or coconut oil) and stir in cocoa powder. Remove from heat and let cool.
2. In a bowl, combine eggs, sugar, salt and vanilla. Stir in cocoa mixture.
3. Whisk coconut flour into batter until there are no lumps. Let batter rest for 4 to 5 minutes to allow it to thicken slightly.
4. Drop batter by the spoonful on greased cookie sheet. Bake at 350°F for 14 minutes.

Yield: 12-16 cookies

Coconut Chocolate Chip Cookies

1 cup sifted coconut flour
1/2 cup grass-fed butter or coconut oil, melted
1 cup brown sugar
4 eggs
1/2 teaspoon vanilla
1 pinch sea salt
1½ cups flake coconut
3/4 cup semisweet chocolate chips

Instructions

1. Combine butter, sugar, eggs, vanilla and salt in a bowl.
2. Stir in coconut, chocolate chips and coconut flour.
3. Drop batter in spoon-sized mounds 1 inch apart on greased cookie sheet.
4. Bake at 375°F for approximately 15 minutes. Cool slightly and remove from cookie sheet.

Servings: 20-24 cookies

Chocolate Chip Cookies

I like to use this fantastic recipe as a healthy substitute for traditional holiday cookies, which generally call for very high amounts of enriched white flour, butter and sugar. Of course, you don't need to wait for special occasions to enjoy them; I just like to make them over the holidays so I know my kids are eating healthy desserts at at least one house they visit!

Admittedly, I was a little nervous when I gave the kids' their first cookie from the batch just because they're so accustomed to eating unhealthy treats. But if their reaction was any indication upon first bite, you should have no complaints from your kids. When I asked how they liked them, the first comment I heard was, "These are ... UH-MAZING!"

Score.

1 large egg
1/2 cup grass-fed butter or coconut oil, melted
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1½ cups oat flour
1/4 cup dark brown sugar, lightly packed
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
2 teaspoons cinnamon
1 pinch sea salt
1/2 cup dark chocolate chips

Instructions

1. Whisk egg, butter and vanilla in a bowl and set aside. Allow butter to cool for 5 minutes after melting before mixing into egg.
2. To a separate bowl, stir together the oat flour, sugar, baking powder, cinnamon and salt.
3. Add wet ingredients to a large mixing bowl or to the bowl of a stand mixer. Slowly add dry ingredients to wet ingredients and mix by hand with a fork, or use the paddle attachment of a stand mixer set to low speed.
4. Once ingredients are combined to form cookie dough, fold in chocolate chips.
5. Refrigerate dough at least 30 minutes prior to baking (the butter or coconut oil needs to firm up before dough goes into the oven).
6. Preheat oven to 350°F once ready to bake.
7. Remove dough from fridge and roll by hand into small balls. Place balls onto a baking sheet lined with parchment paper and press the balls lightly to flatten just a bit.
8. Bake cookies for 8-10 minutes, or until bottom of cookies begin to turn golden brown. Remove cookies from oven and transfer to a wire rack to cool.

Yield: about 16 cookies



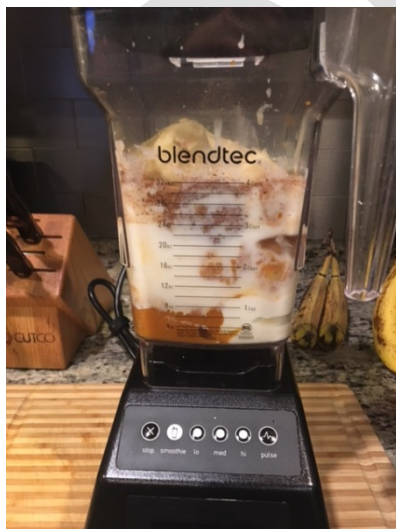
Pumpkin Ice Cream

Amazingness.

- 3 bananas, sliced and frozen
- 1 cup pure pumpkin (100% pure)
- 1 cup greek yogurt (I prefer Fage Total 2%)
- 1 cup low fat buttermilk
- 2 tablespoons raw honey
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 pinch sea salt
- 1/2 cup miniature dark chocolate chips (optional)

Instructions

1. To a blender add all ingredients except chocolate chips.
2. Transfer mixture to an ice cream maker and churn until it reaches soft serve consistency (20-25 minutes). Add chocolate chips and serve, or freeze for later use.
3. If you don't have an ice cream maker, transfer mixture to a rectangular glass baking dish after blending and fold in chocolate chips. Place in freezer until frozen. Allow to soften a bit before serving.





DR

Strawberry Banana Ice Cream

- 1½ cups full fat coconut milk
- 2 cups fresh strawberries, sliced and frozen
- 1 banana, sliced and frozen
- 2-4 tablespoons honey
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 pinch salt
- 1/2 cup miniature dark chocolate chips (optional)

Instructions

1. In a blender, combine coconut milk, strawberries, banana, honey (if using), vanilla extract, and salt and blend until smooth.
2. Transfer mixture to an ice cream maker and churn until it reaches soft serve consistency. Add chocolate chips (if using) and serve, or freeze for later use.
3. If you don't have an ice cream maker, transfer mixture to a rectangular glass baking dish after blending and fold in chocolate chips (if using). Place in freezer until frozen. Allow to soften a bit before serving.

Yield: about 1 quart

Pineapple Ice Cream

- 1½ cups full fat coconut milk
- 2 cups fresh pineapple chunks
- 1 banana, sliced and frozen
- 2-4 tablespoons honey (optional)
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 pinch salt
- 1/2 cup miniature dark chocolate chips

Instructions

1. In a blender, combine coconut milk, pineapple, banana, honey (if using), vanilla extract, and salt until smooth.
2. Transfer mixture to an ice cream maker and churn until it reaches soft serve consistency. Add chocolate chips and serve, or freeze for later use.
3. If you don't have an ice cream maker, transfer mixture to a rectangular glass baking dish after blending and fold in chocolate chips. Place in freezer until frozen. Allow to soften a bit before serving.

Yield: about 1 quart

Note:

If pineapple and banana are ripe enough, honey likely will be unnecessary because coconut milk provides sweetness as well. But taste to adjust for sweetness. Omitting honey will save roughly 30-60 grams of added sugar, so this is important to consider especially if eating in the short term for weight loss.

Pineapple Banana Ice Cream

This recipe is coconut-free so it's ideal for anyone unfortunate enough to be allergic to coconut. On the bright side, it's creamy and delicious and much less fattening than typical heavy cream-based ice creams, so you can still enjoy delicious ice cream while maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

- 1 cup low fat buttermilk
- 1 cup greek yogurt (I prefer Fage Total 2%)
- 2 cups fresh pineapple chunks
- 2 bananas, sliced and frozen
- 2-4 tablespoons raw honey
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 pinch salt
- 1/2 cup miniature dark chocolate chips

Instructions

1. In a blender, combine buttermilk, pineapple, banana, honey, vanilla extract, and salt until smooth.
2. Transfer mixture to an ice cream maker and churn until it reaches soft serve consistency. Add chocolate chips and serve, or freeze for later use.
3. If you don't have an ice cream maker, transfer mixture to a rectangular glass baking dish after blending and fold in chocolate chips. Place in freezer until frozen. Allow to soften a bit before serving.

Yield: about 1 quart



Chocolate Chip Ice Cream

2 cups greek yogurt (I prefer Fage Total 2%)
1 cup low fat buttermilk
2 bananas, sliced and frozen
1/4 cup raw honey
2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
1 pinch salt
1/2 cup miniature dark chocolate chips

Instructions

1. In a blender, combine yogurt, buttermilk, bananas, honey, vanilla extract and salt, and blend until smooth.
2. Transfer mixture to an ice cream maker and churn until it reaches soft serve consistency, 20-25 minutes. Add chocolate chips and serve or freeze for later use.
3. If you don't have an ice cream maker, transfer mixture to a rectangular glass baking dish after blending and fold in chocolate chips. Place in freezer until frozen. Allow to soften a bit before serving.

Yield: about 1 quart

Mint Chocolate Chip & Pistachio Ice Cream

1½ cups full fat coconut milk
1 medium Haas avocado
1 banana, sliced and frozen
2-4 tablespoons raw honey
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
1 teaspoon pure peppermint extract
1 pinch salt
1/2 cup miniature dark chocolate chips
1/2 cup pistachios, chopped

Instructions

1. In a blender, combine coconut milk, avocado, banana, honey, vanilla extract, peppermint extract and salt, and blend until smooth.
2. Transfer mixture to an ice cream maker and churn until it reaches soft serve consistency, 20-25 minutes. Add chocolate chips and pistachios and serve or freeze for later use.

3. If you don't have an ice cream maker, transfer mixture to a rectangular glass baking dish after blending and fold in chocolate chips. Place in freezer until frozen. Allow to soften a bit before serving.

Yield: about 1 quart

Cherry Ice Cream

- 1½ cups full fat coconut milk
- 1 banana, sliced and frozen
- ¼ cup raw honey
- 4 strawberries
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 pinch salt
- 2 cups frozen cherries, pitted and stems removed

Instructions

1. In a blender, combine coconut milk, banana, honey, strawberries, vanilla extract and salt, and blend until smooth.
2. Transfer mixture to an ice cream maker and churn until it reaches soft serve consistency. Add cherries and churn until evenly combined. Serve immediately or freeze for later use.
3. If you don't have an ice cream maker, transfer mixture to a rectangular glass baking dish after blending and fold in cherries. Place in freezer until frozen. Allow to soften a bit before serving.

Yield: about 1 quart

Note:

This particular scoop of ice cream was served over Blueberry Banana Bread (p. xxx).



Chocolate Almond Ice Cream

I placed this ice cream recipe at the end of the others simply because I was afraid you wouldn't even try the rest if you made this one first.

Because all of the ice cream recipes in this book are much healthier than their commercial counterparts that often contain high amounts of sugar and saturated fat in addition to artificial colorings and chemical additives, they should make you think twice about going out to your favorite soft serve parlor for dessert. But this one is almost too good to be true.

This recipe calls for greek yogurt because it lends a bit more creaminess to the finished product, but you can go dairy-free by substituting the yogurt with coconut milk. I've made it both ways and it's fantastic either way.

2 cups full fat coconut milk
2 bananas, sliced and frozen
1/2 cup natural peanut butter or almond butter
6 tablespoons cocoa powder
1/4 cup raw honey
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
1 pinch sea salt
1/4 cup chopped almonds
1/4 cup miniature dark chocolate chips (optional)

Instructions

1. In a blender, combine yogurt, coconut milk, banana, nut butter, cocoa powder, honey, vanilla extract and salt, and blend until smooth.
2. Transfer mixture to an ice cream maker and churn until it reaches soft serve consistency, about 20 minutes. Add chopped almonds and chocolate chips (if using) and churn until evenly combined. Serve immediately or freeze for later use.
3. If you don't have an ice cream maker, transfer mixture to a rectangular glass baking dish after blending and fold in almonds and chocolate chips (if using). Place in freezer until frozen. Allow to soften a bit before serving.

Yield: about 1 quart



Sweet & Nutty Granola Bars

This is one of the sweeter recipes you'll find in this program, but these homemade granola bars are as fun to make as they are to eat. Just keep in mind that you'll be taking in a fair amount of sugar and grains (oats) in addition to the wholesome goodness of the nuts and seeds, so these should be eaten in moderation, where this is defined as a treat eaten no more than once every couple weeks.

You're allowed to have some sugar, but if you're going to start your day with these granola bars and put sugar in your morning coffee, just take it easy on the sugar the rest of the day.

- 2½ cups rolled oats
- 1/2 cup whole raw almonds
- 3 tablespoons raw sunflower seeds
- 1/3 cup melted grass-fed butter (I prefer Kerrygold)
- 1/3 cup raw honey
- 1/4 cup organic coconut sugar or organic cane sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 pinch sea salt

Instructions

1. Bring a large sauce pan to medium heat and add oats, almonds and sunflower seeds. Toast these ingredients by tossing or stirring throughout until ingredients are lightly toasted and fragrant (6-8 minutes). Do not burn oats! Transfer mixture to a large bowl and set aside.
2. To the same sauce pan add the butter, honey and sugar. Cook these ingredients together until the sugar dissolves and the mixture appears foamy (2-3 minutes). Add salt and vanilla and stir.
3. Pour butter/sugar mixture over dry ingredients in bowl and mix with a fork or rubber spatula until oats and nuts are thoroughly coated.
4. Pour mixture into an 8-inch square glass baking pan lined with parchment paper.
5. Using the bottom of a drinking glass, press the ingredients down until they are compact and even. Place in refrigerator for 2 hours before cutting.
6. Cut into bars or squares and store in fridge for up to two weeks.

Notes:

1. All stovetop burners are different when it comes to output of heat. Some nicer stovetops even may have burners set to various BTU outputs so you have a choice between higher and lower heat levels. So "medium heat" on a high-BTU burner meant for rapid water boiling will be much hotter than it would be if you were using a low-output burner meant for simmering stews on very low heat. So just be sure to keep an eye on your dry mixture so its components don't burn.
2. Cooking the butter/sugar mixture longer will result in a darker and thicker caramel that will result in crispier granola bars, so experiment to your liking to turn out bars ranging from softer to harder consistencies.



“Instant” Dill Pickles

Okay, so you have to wait 24 hours before these will be ready to eat, but it sure as heck beats pickling a dozen jars of cucumbers for an entire afternoon. So they’re pretty much instant pickles.

With preservatives and dyes present even in grocery store pickles, this recipe ensures you’ll never have to buy another processed pickle again. Just rotate your batches on a schedule that works for you and you’ll be guaranteed fresh, delicious, healthy pickles whenever you want them.

- 2 cups water
- 1 cup white vinegar
- 6 sprigs fresh dill
- 1 tablespoon sea salt
- 1 tablespoon whole peppercorns
- 2 teaspoons organic granulated cane sugar
- 1/8 teaspoon turmeric
- 1 large cucumber, sliced into rounds or spears

Instructions

1. To make the brine, add all ingredients except cucumber to a glass or plastic bowl with snap top lid and stir until salt and sugar are dissolved.
2. Add cucumbers to brine and cover bowl, ensuring lid is securely attached. Refrigerate for 24 hours.
3. Seriously, it’s that easy. Enjoy.



COCKTAILS

DRAFT

I'm just going to come right out and say it: Alcohol is poison.

We probably shouldn't drink it. But we love it so much the industry has generated so much revenue for the federal government that ingredients don't even need to be listed on its products. Yeah, yeah, it's bad for pregnant women.

Whatever.

Yes, it's legal. It should be. So should every other drug known to man, but that's a topic for another book.

If you recall – and I'm pretty sure you do because you probably high-fived your nearest friend or coworker when you read it – there are no alcohol restrictions in **THE PROGRAM**. There's research to support the claim that some alcohol – namely certain types of wine and spirits – can actually be good for you in moderation. But that still doesn't necessarily mean it's a pivotal component of weight loss, increased energy or an overall healthy lifestyle.

But let's face it. Are you gonna jump aboard this program if you have to give up drinking *in addition* to sodas, potato chips and Happy Meals?

To an extent you still have to live your life and relieve stress. I don't want to make the perfect the enemy of the good and scare you away before you even give this a shot. Because this does work and it will work if you buy in.

Once you realize your life is changing for the better, it's up to you how you want to handle the alcohol. I can make all the life-improvement claims I want right now; you're not going to know what I'm talking about until you start making changes and seeing the results.

I drink bourbon. Probably more than I should. I'd probably never pour another glass of the stuff if the feds would actually legalize the safest and healthiest drug on earth. But it is what it is. Start cooking and eating my recipes, and you probably won't be able to put on weight with moderate alcohol intake even if you tried to anyhow.

So with that, here are a handful of healthy cocktail recipes that will help you put on a good buzz without making you feel like you're falling off the wagon.

Bottoms up!

Frozen Berry Margarita

This is hands-down one of the best margaritas I've ever had. It's delicious in its own right and it's almost unfair that it's made with *no added sugar*.

Let me repeat that. There is no added sugar in this margarita. No disgusting store-bought, translucent strawberry margarita mix, no Sprite, no simple syrup, no honey, no triple sec. Nothing.

Okay, there's maybe a gram or two of sugar in the coconut milk, depending on which brand you buy, but you're barely using any at all and that's not what we're talking about here anyway. Margaritas generally depend on sugar to balance the tartness of the lemon and lime, but because fresh fruit carries this cocktail, their natural sugars provide the sweetness (this will vary depending on how ripe your fruit is).

You won't be able to pull this off in a traditional lemon/lime 'rita so this is a terrific way to enjoy your healthy lifestyle without having to compromise on flavor or fun!

- 3/4 cup agave tequila (I prefer Camarena Reposado)
- 2 cups large fresh strawberries, caps on (about 8)
- 3/4 cup blueberries
- 1/2 banana
- 1/4 cup full fat coconut milk
- Juice of 1/4 lemon
- 2-3 cups ice, adjust as necessary to reach desired thickness

Instructions

1. Add all ingredients to blender and blend on high speed or smoothie setting.
2. Garnish with strawberry slices and fresh mint.

Notes:

1. You can remove the strawberry cap (the leaves or calyx, as it's officially known) if you like, but I prefer to leave it on as the green stuff is good for the immune system.
2. Freezing some or all of the fruit beforehand will result in a thicker mixture, thus reducing the amount of ice you'll need and resulting in a more concentrated flavor. So the best thing to do is to make these a lot and figure out how you like them!



Frozen Piña Colada

Awesomeness

2 cups frozen fresh pineapple chunks
1 frozen banana, halved
1 cup full fat coconut milk
1/2 cup light rum
Juice of 1/2 lime
Flake coconut

Instructions

1. Add all ingredients except flake coconut to blender and blend on high speed or smoothie setting.
2. Garnish with pineapple wedge and flake coconut.

Yield: 2 servings (about 26 ounces)

Notes:

1. I usually have at least four frozen bananas on hand in the freezer at any given time, so in the event your pineapple isn't frozen, fear not. Simply use fresh pineapple, an additional frozen banana, 2 cups of ice cubes and reduce coconut milk to 1/2 cup.
2. Dark rum and bourbon are perfectly acceptable substitutes for light rum.



Frozen Strawberry Banana Daiquiri

Awesomeness

- 3 cups frozen strawberries
- 1 frozen banana, halved
- 1/2 cup full fat coconut milk
- 1/2 cup light rum
- Juice of 1/2 lemon

Instructions

1. Add all ingredients to blender and blend on high speed or smoothie setting.
2. Garnish with lemon wheel or fresh strawberry slices.

Yield: 2 servings (about 26 ounces)

Note:

If your fruit isn't frozen, don't despair. Simply add 2-3 cups ice cubes to blender. The drink will taste a bit more watery but it will still be very tasty.



Sunday Brunch Berry Smoothie

Who says you can't put a little liquor in your breakfast smoothie? Not this guy. Maybe you need to tame the headache from Saturday night's party or you just feel like relaxing while the kids are at Grandma's.

Not here to judge, just to help you start your day with some deliciousness and nutritiousness. So don't feel bad. After all, you're still using flaxseed!

2 cups fresh spinach or kale
1/2 cup coconut milk
1/2 cup light rum
2 cups frozen strawberries
3/4 cup blueberries
1 banana
2-4 tablespoons flaxseed
1 cup ice

Instructions

1. Add all ingredients to blender in order in which they appear and blend on high speed or smoothie setting.

Note: If strawberries aren't frozen, simply add 1-2 cups more ice. This will water down the drink a bit but it still will be delicious and refreshing.

Yield: 2 servings (about 32 ounces)



RANDOM

for

NOW

Almond Flour Bread

(need intro)

2 cups blanched almond flour
1/3 cup plus 1 tablespoon flax seed meal
1/2 teaspoon sea salt
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 cup arrowroot powder
6 tablespoons grass-fed butter
4 eggs
1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
1/2 cup greek yogurt (I prefer Fage Total 2%)

Instructions

1. In a large bowl, mix the almond flour, flaxseed meal, salt, baking soda and arrowroot powder.
2. In a saucepan, melt the butter and let cool for 5 minutes.
3. Whisk melted butter together with the eggs, apple cider vinegar and yogurt.
4. Using a rubber spatula, gently mix wet and dry ingredients to form a batter being careful not to over mix or the batter will become dense.
5. Pour batter into an 8½" x 4½" medium loaf pan greased or lined with parchment paper.
6. Bake at 350°F until a toothpick inserted into the center of the bread comes out clean, approximately 25-30 minutes.
7. Remove bread from pan and allow to cool on a wire rack for at least 15 minutes before slicing.

Note:

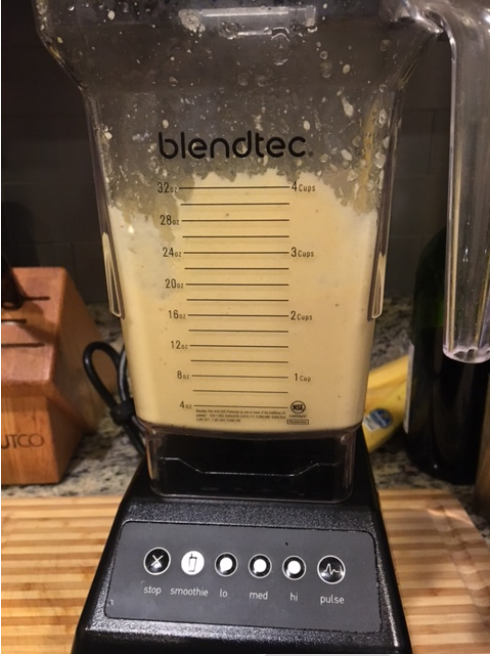
To preserve freshness, place loaf inside a zip top bag or airtight container and store in refrigerator.





Plantain Tortillas

(coming soon)



Gluten-Free Pizza Crust

This grain-free pizza crust is so delicious you'll never know it isn't made with wheat (white) flour, much less that it's actually good for you.

If you have a gluten allergy and you're driven to gluten-free pizzas, rejoice; you'll now be eating pizzas that will make you feel like you're not giving up anything in the way of flavor compared to traditional wheat flour doughs. This crust even comes with a soft, chewy center and crispy outer edge. Eat your heart out, New York City!

Now go make the [Pizza Sauce](#) on [p. xxx](#) and go to town.

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup almond flour
- 1/2 cup tapioca flour
- 1 cup full fat coconut milk
- 1 teaspoon oregano
- 1 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 1/4 teaspoon fennel powder
- 1/4 teaspoon paprika
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 pinch crushed red pepper flakes
- 2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Whisk all ingredients in a large bowl to form a batter.
3. Set a large nonstick skillet to medium heat and add 1 teaspoon olive oil. Swirl oil to coat entire surface of skillet.
4. Fill a 1/2 cup measuring cup full of batter and pour batter into center of skillet. Swirl skillet gently to spread batter across entire surface to form a crust approximately 7" in diameter.
5. Allow the batter to cook until the bottom firms slightly, about 2 minutes. Using a plastic spatula, carefully flip the crust and cook the other side for 1 minute, then place it on a baking rack.
6. Repeat steps 3-5 to prepare second pizza crust, then a third if enough batter remains. Transfer crusts to a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.
7. Bake pizza crusts for 15 minutes or until the crust reaches desired level of crispiness.

Yield: 2-3 pizza crusts

Notes:

1. If you won't be baking the crusts immediately after removing them from skillet, set both aside on a baking rack so air can pass beneath them as they cool. Placing them directly on a flat surface for an extended period of time risks condensation making them soggy.
2. Keep in mind that the pizza crusts will bake further in order to prepare your pizzas, so take care not to bake them fully to your liking while making them. Accounting for 5 additional minutes of baking to cook the prepared pizzas generally will be sufficient.



Guacamole

You're welcome.

2 ripe Haas avocados, rough mash
1 plum tomato, diced (about 2/3 cup)
4 cloves garlic, minced
1/4 of 1 medium red onion, small dice
1 cup (unpacked) cilantro, minced (2-3 tablespoons after mincing)
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon sea salt, adjust to taste
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper, adjust to taste
Juice of 1/2 lime

Instructions

1. Combine avocado, garlic, onion and cilantro in a medium bowl and mix with a fork, taking care not to make mixture too smooth. Fold in tomato.
2. Add lime juice, salt and pepper and stir until combined. Taste to adjust salt and pepper if necessary.
3. Refrigerate at least 1 hour prior to serving, and serve in a bowl with baked plantains, or use as a condiment with tacos. Or just eat it with a spoon.



Taco Shells

1/2 cup almond flour
1/2 cup tapioca flour
1 cup full fat coconut milk
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1 pinch sea salt
Extra virgin coconut or olive oil, to cook

Yield: 5-6 soft taco shells

Note:

You can substitute almond flour with coconut flour in the event of a tree nut allergy or simple preference, but this will require adding about 1 extra cup of coconut milk. This will also yield more shells.



Instant Pizza Dough

- 1 cup water (between 120°F and 130°F)
- 2 tablespoons raw honey
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 tablespoon instant yeast
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 1½ cups bread flour (substitute all-purpose flour)
- 1½ cups whole wheat flour



Traditional Pizza Dough

- 1¼ cups water (between 120°F and 130°F)
- 2 teaspoons instant yeast
- 2 tablespoons organic pure cane sugar
- 1 tablespoon raw honey
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 teaspoons sea salt
- 1½ cups bread flour (substitute all-purpose flour)
- 1½ cups whole wheat flour

Pizza Sauce

Unbelievably easy and delicious. No kidding, this sauce is pizza-shop-good. And not mainstream, crap pizza shops that are all over the place, either. I'm talking Sicilian-immigrant-pizza-shop-good.

Renna's-Pizza-in-Olean, NY-good.

If you happen to live in the small pocket of the planet that has been blessed with this family-run pizza parlor and you're reading this, there's a really good chance you're rolling your eyes at how pretentious that comparison probably sounds. I won't argue with you. I'm not saying I can replicate Renna's pizza. But I've long wondered what Renna's has used for its amazing sauce, and I'm thinking it might just have to be homemade to be as good as it is. Because this recipe is legit. If it's not as good, it's close. As in, if the commercial pizza chains can sell their pizzas, you could use this sauce to open your own joint. Without a doubt.

Tomato seeds sometimes lend bitterness to sauce, so the key is to slice the tomatoes in half and squeeze out the seeds and any gel and pulpy innards that fall out easily, leaving only the meaty flesh behind. This is important to the final consistency of the sauce as well. And the best part is you don't even need to skin the tomatoes before roasting them. That would be a colossal pain given the small size of the tomatoes and the value just isn't there. You're going to blast these in the blender so there will be no visible skin whatsoever once you've converted this to a sauce.

Ingredients

4 pounds ripe Juliet tomatoes
Extra virgin olive oil
Sea salt
Ground black pepper
Granulated garlic
Onion powder
Dried oregano
Crushed red pepper flakes
1 handful fresh basil (about 1 cup unpacked)

Instructions

1. This is one of those recipes whose ingredients you just don't measure. Throw the squeezed tomatoes into a large bowl and cover evenly with the olive oil and seasonings, reserving the basil. (I probably easily use 1/4 cup olive oil and definitely add a couple large pinches of salt.)
2. Toss tomatoes to coat evenly with flavor and spread onto baking sheets lined with a thin layer of olive oil, parchment paper or silicone baking sheet liners. Bake in a 250°F oven for about 2 hours. You'll know they're done when the tomatoes have wrinkled, reduced in size a bit and the house smells amazing.

3. Pull tomatoes out of the oven and add them to a powerful blender along with the fresh basil. Blend on high speed until tomatoes are pureed into sauce. Add a touch of water to the blender to ensure smooth blending as necessary. Taste to adjust salt if necessary as well.

This recipe yields about 1 pint of sauce. Transfer sauce to a pint jar and store in the refrigerator. It will keep in the fridge for up to 2 weeks, but there's no way it will be around after even a few days if you're anything like me.

Use this sauce for Gluten-Free Margherita Pizza (p. xxx), Eggplant Parmigiana (p. xxx), Pizza Omelet (p. xxx) or just eat it from a tablespoon. It really is that good.



Savory Avocado Mousse

2 ripe avocados
Zest of 1 lime
2 tablespoons lime juice
1/4 cup greek yogurt
Sea salt and ground black pepper, to taste

Cilantro Yogurt Sauce

12 ounces plain yogurt
1/2 small red onion, diced
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 cups fresh unpacked cilantro, minced (about 1/4 cup after mincing)
Juice of 1/2 lemon
1/4 teaspoon ground coriander
Sea salt, to taste
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Strawberry Jam

2 cups sliced strawberries (caps removed)
1/4 cup organic cane sugar
Juice of 1 lemon (about 2 tablespoons)
Zest of 1 lemon (about 1 teaspoon)

Mexican Restaurant Salsa

1-2 serrano or jalapeno chiles (1 for medium heat, 2 for hot)
1 small yellow onion
1 clove garlic
6 whole peeled tomatoes, rinsed (from a can)
1 cup tomato sauce
8 stalks cilantro (stems included)
1 tablespoon kosher salt
2 teaspoons fine ground black pepper
1 cup water
Juice 1/2 lemon

Instructions

1. Add all ingredients but water to the bowl of a food processor and puree for at least 30 seconds, scraping the sides of the bowl as necessary. Add water and puree until smooth. Refrigerate at least 1 hour prior to serving.
2. Serve with baked plantains or as a condiment for plantain tortilla tacos or turkey tacos.

Pico de Gallo

3 fresh, ripe on-the-vine or plum tomatoes
3 cloves fresh garlic, minced
1/2 small red onion, small dice
1/2 cup fresh cilantro, minced (about 1 tablespoon after mincing)
1 teaspoon cumin
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
Juice of 1/2 lime
Sea salt, to taste
Ground black pepper, to taste
Red pepper flakes, to taste (optional)

Summer Salsa

1 (15 ounce) can black beans, rinsed and drained
1/2 green bell pepper, diced (about 1/2 cup)
1 small jalapeno, seeded and minced
2 cups diced fresh tomatoes (about 1 ½ tomatoes)
1/2 red onion, small dice (about 1/2 cup)
1 packed tablespoon chopped cilantro
1 clove garlic, minced
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon celery seed
Juice of 1 lime
2 pinches sea salt, more to taste
Ground black pepper, to taste
1 tablespoon olive oil

Instructions

1. Combine all ingredients in a medium bowl and chill at least 1 hour in the fridge prior to serving.
2. Serve with plantain tortilla chips, baked plantain chips or freshly sliced cucumbers.

Ketchup

6 ounces tomato paste
1/2 cup light corn syrup
1/2 cup white vinegar
1/4 cup water
1 tablespoon organic granulated cane sugar
1 teaspoon sea salt
1/4 teaspoon celery seed
1/4 teaspoon onion powder
1/8 teaspoon garlic powder

Instructions

1. Combine all ingredients in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Whisk until fully combined.
2. When mixture comes to a boil, turn heat to low and simmer for 15 minutes, stirring often.
3. Remove from heat and allow to cool, then transfer to airtight container and store in fridge.

Yield: 1 1/2 cups

Mayonnaise

2 egg yolks
1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
1 teaspoon white wine vinegar
1/2 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1/4 teaspoon sea salt
1 cup avocado oil

Instructions

1. Add all ingredients except avocado oil to jar and blend using an immersion blender until fully combined.
2. Slowly stream in avocado oil while blending with the immersion blender. Move blender around as necessary to incorporate all the oil. Continue until all oil is incorporated. Mayonnaise should be very thick.

Cole Slaw

- 1 head green cabbage, finely shredded (about 6 cups)
- 2 large carrots, peeled and finely shredded (about 2 cups)
- 1 cup greek yogurt (I prefer Fage Total 2%) (substitute homemade mayonnaise (p. xxx))
- 1/4 cup low-fat buttermilk
- 3 tablespoons white vinegar
- 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed orange juice
- 2 tablespoons organic cane sugar
- 1 teaspoon dry mustard (I prefer Colman's)
- 2 teaspoons onion powder
- 2 teaspoons celery salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pure ground black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon sea salt, more to taste

Instructions

1. (need)

Barbeque Sauce

- 1 cup ketchup
- 1/2 cup molasses
- 1/4 cup Dijon mustard
- 1/4 cup distilled white vinegar
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 3/4 teaspoon granulated garlic

Yield: about 1 cup

Applesauce

- 2 apples of choice, cored (I prefer Gala, Honey Crisp or Red Delicious)
- 2 tablespoons water, adjust for consistency
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

Yield: 1-1¼ cups

Pineapple Bacon Poppers

I totally ripped off this recipe from the Stupid Easy Paleo blog (add a .com to that name and check it out). Steph Gaudreau is a badass all the way around and I hope she doesn't sue me for this. Being able to eat this once a week would almost be worth it.

1/2 fresh pineapple
1 large red, yellow or orange bell peppers
6 slices bacon (I prefer Applegate Farms)
1 pinch sea salt
1 pinch paprika
Toothpicks

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil or parchment paper.
2. Peel and core the pineapple (hold vertically and slice along the core from top to bottom into four sections). Cut into moderately-sized chunks.
3. Slice the bell peppers into quarters (remove any white pulp from inside of the pepper slices). Cut the peppers into pieces that are roughly the same size as the pineapple chunks.
4. Cut each slice of bacon in half lengthwise then in half widthwise to get 4 strips.
5. Place 1 chunk each pineapple and pepper together and wrap with bacon. Secure with a toothpick.
6. Arrange poppers on the baking sheet and dust with smoked paprika.
7. Bake for 25 min or until the bacon is crispy and the peppers are softened.

Servings: 18-24 pieces



THE WORKOUT

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Need workout intro

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A = 50 JUMPING JACKS **N** = 40 HIGH KNEES
B = 20 CRUNCHES **O** = 40 JUMPING JACKS
C = 30 SQUATS **P** = 20 ARM CIRCLES
D = 15 PUSH-UPS **Q** = 30 CRUNCHES
E = 1 MIN WALL SIT **R** = 15 PUSH-UPS
F = 30 HIGH KNEES **S** = 60 HIGH KNEES
G = 20 ARM CIRCLES **T** = 15 SQUATS
H = 20 SQUATS **U** = 30 ARM CIRCLES
I = 30 JUMPING JACKS **V** = 3 MIN WALL SIT
J = 15 CRUNCHES **W** = 20 LUNGES
K = 10 PUSH-UPS **X** = 60 JUMPING JACKS
L = 2 MIN WALL SIT **Y** = 20 CRUNCHES
M = 10 LUNGES **Z** = 20 PUSH-UPS

**THE
END**

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AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

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The Program

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