



TOP RECIPES *of* 2015



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SALADS



RAINBOW POWER SALAD WITH ROASTED CHICKPEAS



click [here](#) to see the recipe and photos on the blog!

notes

This salad does not keep well once tossed with the sauce. Keep all ingredients separate until ready to serve.

ingredients

- 5 Minute Magic Green Sauce for dressing
- 3 large tri-color carrots (I used one orange, one red, and one yellow)
- 1 medium zucchini
- ¼ cup fresh basil, cut into ribbons
- 1 can chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin
- generous sprinkling of salt and pepper

directions

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit. Pat the chickpeas dry with paper towels and toss with the olive oil, chili powder, cumin, and salt and pepper. Arrange in a single layer on a baking sheet and bake for 30-40 minutes, stirring or shaking the pan every once in a while to prevent over browning. The chickpeas are done when they are crispy and golden brown.
2. Shred the vegetables into very thin ribbons or slices using a grater, peeler, mandoline, or spiralizer. It's sort of up to you how you want the shape of the vegetables to be. After shredding, press the zucchini lightly with paper towels to remove excess moisture. Toss the vegetables with the basil and set aside.
3. Toss the vegetables with a scoop of Magic Green Sauce - start out with about 1/2 cup and add more if needed. Add the roasted chickpeas and toss gently to combine. Arrange the salad into bowls and serve immediately.

VIETNAMESE CHICKEN SALAD WITH RICE NOODLES



click [here](#) to see the recipe and photos on the blog!

notes

I loved the little bite of heat with this recipe! I would describe it as mild++. But if you are nervous about the level of spiciness, just remove the ribs and seeds before adding the peppers to the dressing.

If you're assembling the recipe ahead of time, I would suggest keeping the veggies separate from the dressing, and tossing it together just before serving.

ingredients

FOR THE DRESSING:

- 3 serrano peppers
- 4 cloves garlic
- 2 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 4 tablespoons fish sauce
- 6 tablespoons lime juice
- 6 tablespoons vegetable oil

FOR THE SALAD:

- 1 lb. boneless skinless chicken breasts
- 6 ounces rice noodles
- 4 large carrots, peeled
- 8-10 full leaves of green cabbage
- one large handful of each - cilantro leaves, mint leaves, and green onions

directions

1. **DRESSING:** Thinly slice the serranos and set aside. Pulse all the remaining dressing ingredients in a food processor until smooth. Stir in the sliced serranos.
2. **CHICKEN:** Bring a large pot of water to boil over high heat. When the water reaches a rolling boil, add the chicken breasts, turn heat off, and cover with a tight-fitting lid. Let the chicken cook for 25-30 minutes - while it's cooking, you can prep the other ingredients. Remove from water, let cool slightly, and shred with two forks. Pour a small amount of the prepared dressing on the chicken to give it flavor and set aside or refrigerate until ready to use.
3. **NOODLES:** Soak the rice noodles in a large bowl of cold water for 15 minutes or until softened. Heat a small amount of the dressing in a large skillet over medium high heat. Add the drained noodles and stir-fry for 5 minutes (I found it helpful to grab the handle and give the pan a good shake every 30 seconds or so). Cut through the noodles with a kitchen scissors if you want them to be shorter and easier to eat.
4. **VEGETABLES:** Cut the carrots into pieces and pulse in a food processor for 10-15 seconds until finely chopped. Shred the cabbage. Mince the cilantro, mint, and green onions.
5. **ASSEMBLY:** Toss the chicken, noodles, vegetables, and remaining dressing (to taste) together. Serve immediately.

SPICY SOUTHWESTERN SALAD WITH AVOCADO DRESSING



click [here](#) to see the recipe and photos on the blog!

notes

This recipe can be made vegan by swapping the Greek yogurt with a non-dairy yogurt alternative - even just a little hunk of tofu would work, or maybe the whole avocado instead of half. But don't use oil - the oil and avocado don't really blend together well (I speak from experience).

ingredients

FOR THE SALAD:

- 2 sweet potatoes
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 heaping teaspoon each cumin and chili powder (plus a sprinkle of cayenne if you like it hot)
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 14-ounce can black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 14-ounce can sweet corn, rinsed and drained
- 1 romaine heart, chopped

FOR THE DRESSING:

- half an avocado
- 1/4 cup Greek yogurt
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 cup cilantro leaves and stems
- 1 small clove of garlic
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- a squeeze of lime juice

directions

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Peel the sweet potatoes and chop into bite-sized pieces. Mix the olive oil, cumin, and chili powder together in a small bowl. Brush mixture on sweet potatoes. Roast for 10 minutes. Stir or shake the pan. Turn heat up to 425, and roast for another 10-15 minutes. Check, stir, and bake until the sweet potatoes are just barely roasty-brown on the outside. Season with salt and pepper.
2. Meanwhile, pulse all the dressing ingredients in a food processor until mostly smooth.
3. Toss the beans, corn, lettuce, and sweet potatoes with the dressing. Serve with chips and/or the other half of the avocado for extra yum!

AUTUMN GLOW SALAD WITH LEMON DRESSING



click [here](#) to see the recipe and photos on the blog!

notes

If you want some crunch, add a few handfuls of chopped nuts like cashews or pecans.

ingredients

FOR THE SALAD:

- 1 cup freekeh or other grain (quinoa, bulgur, etc.)
- 1 head cauliflower
- 2 sweet potatoes
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- a sprinkle of dried spices that you like, or a few sprigs of thyme, rosemary, etc.
- 1 large apple

FOR THE DRESSING:

- 1 bunch parsley (about 1 cup), minced
- 1 small clove garlic, minced
- 2/3 cup olive oil
- juice of one lemon (more to taste)
- 1 teaspoon agave (optional)
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- pepper to taste

directions

1. Rinse the grains and place in a rice cooker with the appropriate amount of broth or water (refer to package directions - it depends on the grain). Set on the white rice setting and prep the other stuff while it cooks.
2. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees. Chop the cauliflower into small florets. Peel and chop the sweet potatoes. Place on a baking sheet and drizzle with oil. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and add a few sprigs of thyme or other dried spices if you have some that you like. Roast for 20 minutes, stir, and roast for another 10-15 minutes. When they are golden brown and soft, remove from oven and set aside.
3. While the veggies are roasting, combine all dressing ingredients in a jar with a tight lid and shake to combine. Chop the apple and set aside.
4. When the grains and vegetables are done, toss everything together. This can be done when everything is hot or when it's cooled, although the texture will be different (heavier) when hot. Store leftovers separately (salad and dressing) if possible.

NOODLES



CREAMY SPINACH SWEET POTATO NOODLES



click [here](#) to see the recipe and photos on the blog!

notes

This recipe makes MORE than enough sauce - enough for at least 6 or 8 servings, if not more. I left the amounts that way because it seemed silly to make the sauce with only about ½ cup of cashews - it wouldn't even really be enough to get going around in the blender, and I promise you'll be able to find ways to use the remaining sauce. It's extremely versatile.

ingredients

- 1 cup cashews
- 3/4 cup water (more for soaking)
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 4 large sweet potatoes, spiralized
- 2 cups baby spinach
- a handful of fresh basil leaves, chives, or other herbs
- salt and pepper to taste
- olive oil for drizzling

directions

1. Cover the cashews with water in a bowl and soak for 2 hours or so.
2. Drain and rinse thoroughly. Place in a food processor or blender (I got better texture with the blender) and add the 3/4 cup water, salt, and garlic. Puree until very smooth.
3. Heat the oil in a large skillet over high heat. Add the sweet potatoes; toss in the pan for 6-7 minutes with tongs until tender-crisp. Remove from heat and toss in the spinach - it should wilt pretty quickly.
4. Add half of the herbs and half of the sauce to the pan and toss to combine. Add water if the mixture is too sticky. Season generously with salt and pepper, drizzle with olive oil, and top with the remaining fresh herbs.

BANGKOK COCONUT CURRY NOODLE BOWLS



click [here](#) to see the recipe and photos on the blog!

notes

If you want more of a saucy, soupy consistency to the curry, add the broth with the coconut milk. Otherwise leave it out - you won't have as much sauce and it will be more like a velvety, sticky sauce on the noodles (also yummy). The pictures here show the version WITH the broth.

ingredients

FOR THE SAUCE:

- 1 tablespoon oil
- 2 shallots
- 1 tablespoon fresh ginger, minced
- 2 tablespoons red curry paste
- 1 14-ounce can regular coconut milk
- 1/2 cup reduced sodium chicken or veggie broth (optional - see notes)
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1 tablespoon hot chili paste (sambal oelek)
- 2 tablespoons fish sauce
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce

FOR THE BOWLS:

- 4 ounces rice noodles
- 1 tablespoon oil
- half an onion, chopped
- 1 cup chopped broccoli florets
- 1 cup shredded carrots
- 1 cup chopped asparagus
- 1 cup shredded purple cabbage
- sesame seeds for topping
- limes for serving
- a handful of fresh basil for serving

directions

1. **Noodles:** Soak the noodles in a bowl of cold water. Start this right away - they need at least 20 minutes or so of soaking. When they're soft, drain and rinse.
2. **Sauce:** Heat the oil in a large saucepan. Add the shallots and ginger; stir fry for 3-5 minutes. Add the curry paste; stir fry for 1 minute. Add the coconut milk, sugar, chili paste, fish sauce, and soy sauce. Simmer for 15 minutes or so while you prep the rest of the ingredients - it should thicken slightly. If you're adding the broth to make the sauce go farther, you might need a little extra simmer time for the sauce to thicken.
3. **Vegetables and Assembly:** In a large skillet, heat the oil over high heat. Add the onion, carrots, broccoli, and asparagus. Stir fry for about 5 minutes until the broccoli and asparagus are bright green. Add the noodles and toss around in the pan with the vegetables. Add the sauce and toss together until just combined (if you cook it too long at this point, the noodles might get too sticky). Serve topped with the purple cabbage and sesame seeds and a squeeze of lime or basil leaves if you want.

DATE NIGHT MUSHROOM PASTA WITH GOAT CHEESE



click [here](#) to see the recipe and photos on the blog!

ingredients

- 16 ounces uncooked whole wheat farfalle pasta
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 24 ounces fresh mushrooms, sliced (I used cremini and shiitake)
- 1/4 cup minced garlic or shallots, or a combination of both
- a splash of white wine (about 1/3 cup)
- 1/2 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup chicken or vegetable broth (as needed)
- 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese
- 2 cups spinach, chopped
- 6 ounces goat cheese

directions

1. **PASTA:** Cook the pasta according to package directions. Drain and set aside.
2. **MUSHROOMS:** Heat the butter and oil in a large skillet or pot over medium high heat. Add the mushrooms and saute until golden brown and soft, 5-10 minutes. The mushrooms will cook down and reduce in size. Add the garlic and white wine (it should sizzle a bit) and give it a few good stirs. Add the whipping cream and salt.
3. **TOSS:** In a large pot, toss the pasta with the mushroom sauce from step two. Add some or all of the broth if you feel like you want there to be more sauciness (it sort of depends on personal preference - we had it with the added broth, and without, and it was good both times).
4. **SERVE:** While the pasta is still warm, stir in the Parmesan cheese. Just before serving, stir in the spinach and goat cheese, or just top each serving with a few hunks of goat cheese.

SUN DRIED TOMATO CHICKEN FLORENTINE



click [here](#) to see the recipe and photos on the blog!

notes

I've also used DeLallo's sun dried tomato bruschetta in this recipe as well as DeLallo's jarred cherry tomatoes (similar to the sun dried tomatoes but a little more plump and round).

ingredients

- 8 ounces ziti or other pasta
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 lb. chicken, cut into bite sized pieces
- 1 tablespoon all purpose seasoning mix for the chicken
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne
- 1 7-ounce jar DeLallo sun dried tomatoes, drained
- 3 cloves garlic
- 1/2 cup half and half
- 1 1/2 cups whole milk
- 1/2 cup chicken broth
- 1 1/2 cups Mozzarella cheese
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups spinach

directions

1. Cook the pasta according to package directions. Drain and set aside.
2. Heat the butter in a skillet over medium high heat. Add the chicken and sprinkle with the seasoning and the cayenne. Saute until the chicken is cooked through.
3. Drain the oil from the sun dried tomatoes. Chop into smaller pieces if you want. Add them to the pan with the garlic and saute for a few minutes, until fragrant. You will probably still get some of the oil from the sun dried tomatoes - that's okay.
4. Add the half and half, milk, chicken broth, and Mozzarella cheese. Stir until the sauce is smooth and bubbly and the cheese is melted. It should start to thicken up slightly.
5. Stir in the cooked pasta and spinach - the spinach will start to cook down almost immediately. If needed, add extra water or broth or milk to the sauce to thin it out, or add more cheese to thicken slightly.

SPICY SAUSAGE RIGATONI



click [here](#) to see the recipe and photos on the blog!

ingredients

- 1 tablespoon oil or butter
- half of a yellow onion, minced
- 4 carrots, minced
- 12 ounces spicy Italian sausage (casings removed - just the ground meat)
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/2 cup Barefoot Rich Red Blend
- 1 28 ounce can San Marzano tomatoes, including their juice
- 1/4 cup balsamic or Italian dressing (optional)
- 1 lb. whole wheat rigatoni
- 1/2 cup reserved pasta water
- Parmesan and parsley or basil for topping

directions

1. Heat the oil in a skillet over medium high heat. Add the onion and carrots - saute for 10 minutes or so, until the vegetables are very soft.
2. Add the ground sausage, oregano, red pepper flakes, salt, and pepper. When the sausage is fully cooked, add the wine to get the browned bits off the bottom of the pan.
3. Add the tomatoes and dressing - simmer for 10-20 minutes while the pasta is cooking.
4. Cook the pasta according to package directions. When draining, reserve 1/2 cup of the cooking water. Combine the pasta, the sauce, and the reserved water and toss gently to combine. Transfer to a large serving dish and top with Parmesan and parsley or basil. Serve with more Barefoot Rich Red Blend!

MAIN DISH YUMS



5-INGREDIENT LEMON CHICKEN WITH ASPARAGUS



click [here](#) to see the recipe and photos on the blog!

notes

For the honey butter sauce, I just melted additional butter and honey in the hot pan after caramelizing the lemons and poured it over the chicken. This mixture definitely picked up some of the residual lemon flavor from the pan, so if that isn't your thing, be sure to melt the butter and honey in a separate pan.

ingredients

- 1 lb. boneless skinless chicken breasts
- 1/4 cup flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt, pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 teaspoon lemon pepper seasoning
- 1-2 cups chopped asparagus
- 2 lemons, sliced
- 2 tablespoons honey + 2 tablespoons butter (optional)
- parsley for topping (optional)

directions

1. **CHICKEN:** Cover the chicken breasts with plastic wrap and pound until each piece is about a 3/4 of an inch thick. (NOTE: If your chicken breasts are really thick, you can just cut them in half horizontally to make thinner pieces rather than pounding. Works like a charm.) Place the flour and salt and pepper in a shallow dish and gently toss each chicken breast in the dish to coat. Melt the butter in a large skillet over medium high heat; add the chicken and saute for 3-5 minutes on each side, until golden brown, sprinkling each side with the lemon pepper directly in the pan. When the chicken is golden brown and cooked through, transfer to a plate.
2. **ASPARAGUS AND LEMONS:** Add the chopped asparagus to the pan. Saute for a few minutes until bright green and tender crisp. Remove from the pan and set aside. Lay the lemon slices flat on the bottom of the pan and cook for a few minutes on each side without stirring so that they caramelize and pick up the browned bits left in the pan from the chicken and butter. (NOTE: adding a tiny pat of butter in with the lemons also helps prevent sticking and promote browning.) Remove the lemons from the pan and set aside.
3. **ASSEMBLY:** Layer all the ingredients back into the skillet - asparagus, chicken, and lemon slices on top.

SPICY SHRIMP TACOS WITH GARLIC CILANTRO SLAW



click [here](#) to see the recipe and photos on the blog!

notes

For the three spices, I used chili powder, cumin, and a store bought southwestern seasoning mix. I would say the chili powder and the cumin are must-haves for the color and flavor, but then just add whatever else you like or have in your spice cabinet from there. If you don't have a seasoning mix that's salted, be sure to add salt and pepper.

ingredients

FOR THE GARLIC CILANTRO LIME SAUCE:

- 1/4 cup oil
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/2 cup chopped green onions
- 1/2 cup cilantro leaves
- 2-3 cloves garlic (less if you're sensitive to garlicky things)
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- juice of 2 limes
- 1/2 cup sour cream

FOR THE SHRIMP TACOS:

- 1 lb. shrimp, peeled and deveined, tails removed
- 1 teaspoon each chili powder, cumin, and southwestern seasoning (see notes)
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper (more or less to taste)
- 2-3 cups shredded green cabbage
- 8 small corn tortillas
- 1-2 avocados
- Cotija cheese and additional cilantro for topping
- lime wedges for serving

directions

1. Pulse all the sauce ingredients except the sour cream in a food processor. When mostly smooth, add the sour cream and pulse until combined. Taste and adjust as needed. Set aside.
2. Heat a drizzle of oil a large skillet over medium high heat. Pat the shrimp dry with paper towels and sprinkle with the spices. Add the shrimp to the hot pan and saute for 5-8 minutes, flipping occasionally, until the shrimp are cooked through.
3. Toss some of the sauce (not all) with the cabbage until it the cabbage is coated to your liking. It should resemble a coleslaw - you want it to be enough sauce so the cabbage is weighed down a little bit. Use leftover sauce on top of the tacos or in other recipes.
4. To serve tacos, smash a spoonful of avocado on the tortillas, top with a few pieces of shrimp, top with coleslaw, and finish with Cotija cheese, cilantro, and lime wedges.

GARLIC BASIL CHICKEN WITH TOMATO BUTTER SAUCE



click [here](#) to see the recipe and photos on the blog!

notes

You can see the picture to see how much basil I used. I pulled all those leaves off, ribbon-ed them, and added them in! It was probably about one cup, loosely packed, but go by taste. If you're not huge on basil, start with less.

ingredients

- 1 lb. boneless skinless chicken breasts
- salt and pepper
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 5-6 roma tomatoes, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- one handful fresh basil, loosely packed, cut into ribbons
- 1/4 cup LAND O LAKES® European Style Super Premium Salted Butter
- 8 ounces pasta, like spaghetti, linguine, or bucatini

directions

1. Cover the chicken with plastic wrap and pound each piece to an even thickness, about one inch or so in the thickest parts (this just helps it cook faster and more evenly). Remove the plastic and sprinkle each piece of chicken generously with sea salt and freshly ground pepper.
2. Prep the tomatoes, garlic, and basil and set aside. Make the pasta according to package directions.
3. Heat the olive oil in a large heavy skillet until a drop of water sizzles across the top. Add the chicken and pan-fry for several minutes on each side - the goal here is to get the chicken cooked AND get a nice browning on the outside. When the chicken is done, set aside.
4. Give the oil a few minutes to cool, add the tomatoes, and return to heat (if you add the tomatoes to the hot oil it will be a splatter-fest). Simmer to cook the tomatoes down into a chunky-sauce-like-mixture. Add the garlic and butter and stir to combine until the butter is melted. Add the chicken back in to soak in the sauce for a few minutes.
5. Just before serving, stir in the basil. Top servings of pasta with the chicken and the sauce.

CROCKPOT BRAISED BEEF RAGU WITH POLENTA



click [here](#) to see the recipe and photos on the blog!

notes

I've done this a few ways in terms of the tomato sauce - I've used two cans, with one drained and one undrained. I've used two full cans, both undrained. And I've used just one can, undrained. So it can work a lot of different ways - it just depends on your desired meat-to-tomato ratio for the sauce.

ingredients

FOR THE BRAISED BEEF RAGU:

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 lbs. beef rump roast or round roast
- half a yellow or white onion, minced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 28-ounce cans San Marzano whole tomatoes (see notes)
- 1/2 cup red wine
- 3 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 teaspoon basil
- 1 teaspoon oregano
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 teaspoons salt
- black pepper to taste

FOR THE POLENTA:

- 6 cups water
- 1-2 teaspoons salt
- 1 3/4 cup yellow cornmeal
- 3 tablespoons butter

directions

1. Optional, but for best tasting results: Heat the olive oil in a large, deep frying pan. Add the beef in one whole piece and fry on each side for about 5 minutes, turning until the whole exterior is golden brown. I had some splattering issues so I covered the pan with a lid.
2. Place all remaining ingredients with the beef in a crockpot or slow cooker (5 quart size worked for me). Cover and cook on low for 7-8 hours. When the beef falls apart easily when pulled at with two forks, it is ready. Shred the beef into pieces and give it a good stir.
3. For the polenta, boil the water and add the salt. Slowly add the cornmeal, whisking constantly to avoid lumps. The polenta will start to thicken quickly. Continue whisking or stirring for 2-3 minutes before removing from heat. Stir in the butter until melted (you can also add cheese I'M JUST SAYING). For solid and chewy polenta, pour into a rectangular dish, let cool for 15-20 minutes, and cut into pieces. For softer polenta (my preference), serve scoops of polenta immediately before it has hardened.

THAI YELLOW CHICKEN CURRY WITH POTATOES



click [here](#) to see the recipe and photos on the blog!

notes

The yellow curry paste I use is **HOMEMADE** because I can never find it in the store - and it's super easy to make. It takes about 45 minutes, but then you'll have enough to last you through five batches of curry (and you can freeze it).

[Here's the recipe!](#)

ingredients

- 1 tablespoon oil
- half a yellow onion, sliced thinly
- 1 pound boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1/3 cup yellow curry paste
- 10 baby golden yukon potatoes, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1 14-ounce can coconut cream (it's like coconut milk, but even more luscious)
- 1/2 to 1 cup water
- 2 teaspoons fish sauce (optional)
- 1-2 tablespoons brown sugar (optional)
- cilantro and rice for serving

directions

1. Heat the oil in a large pot over medium low heat. Add the onions and saute for a few minutes until the onions are fragrant and softened. Add the chicken and curry paste; saute for 3-5 minutes. Add the potatoes and stir to coat with the curry paste.
2. Add the coconut cream and 1/2 cup water to the pot - simmer for 20-30 minutes or until the chicken and potatoes are fully cooked, adding more water depending on the consistency you want for the sauce.
3. Stir in the fish sauce and brown sugar to really take it up a notch. Seriously - so good. Serve over rice.

BROWN BUTTER SCALLOPS WITH PARMESAN RISOTTO



click [here](#) to see the recipe and photos on the blog!

ingredients

FOR THE PARMESAN RISOTTO:

- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 minced clove garlic or 1 minced shallot (or both)
- 1 cup arborio rice
- 1/2 cup white wine
- 3-ish cups of chicken broth
- 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese

FOR THE SEARED SCALLOPS:

- 1 tablespoon grapeseed oil
- 1 pound jumbo scallops

FOR THE SPINACH OR KALE:

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 clove minced garlic
- 4 cups spinach or kale

FOR THE BROWN BUTTER:

- 3 tablespoons butter

directions

1. **FOR THE RISOTTO:** In a large non-stick skillet over medium heat, melt the butter. Add the garlic or shallots and saute for a minute or two, until soft and fragrant. Add the arborio rice, stir to coat with butter. Add the white wine and enjoy the sizzles. Add the broth, 1/2 cup at a time, and simmer/stir after each addition until the rice is soft and creamy. I usually err on the side of more liquid to get a creamier texture. Add the parmesan and stir until incorporated. Salt + pepp to taste.
2. **FOR THE SEARED SCALLOPS:** Heat oil in nonstick skillet. Pat scallops dry (VERY DRY, as dry as possible), sprinkle with salt, and add to pan. They should sizzle (if not, you need a hotter pan.) Shake gently to prevent sticking. After 2-3 minutes, flip each scallop over. They should have a pretty golden brown exterior and an opaque inside. Transfer to a paper towel lined plate to absorb excess oil. Serve immediately.
3. **FOR THE SAUTÉED SPINACH:** Heat the oil over medium low heat. Add the garlic, stir for a minute to get the flavor going. Add the spinach or kale and stir until wilted.
4. **FOR THE BROWN BUTTER:** Put a few tablespoons of butter in a clean skillet over medium heat and stir it while watching it closely - when it starts to look golden and foamy, remove from heat, transfer to a heat-proof bowl to cool slightly, then drizzle over the risotto, scallops, and greens.

MEDITERRANEAN QUINOA BOWLS



click [here](#) to see the recipe and photos on the blog!

notes

For a vegan version, replace the feta cheese with white beans.

ingredients

FOR THE ROASTED RED PEPPER SAUCE:

- 1 16 ounce jar roasted red peppers, drained (or roast your own and win the food game!)
- 1 clove garlic
- 1/2 teaspoon salt (more to taste)
- juice of one lemon
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/2 cup almonds

FOR THE ROASTED RED PEPPER SAUCE (BUILD BASED ON WHAT YOU LIKE):

- cooked quinoa
- spinach, kale, or cucumber
- feta cheese
- kalamata olives
- pepperoncini
- thinly sliced red onion
- hummus
- fresh basil or parsley
- olive oil, lemon juice, salt, pepper

directions

1. Pulse all the ingredients for the sauce in a food processor or blender until mostly smooth. The texture should be thick and textured (see picture).
2. Cook the quinoa according to package directions (I always do mine in a rice cooker while I get everything else ready). When the quinoa is done, build yourself a Mediterranean Quinoa Bowl!
3. Store leftovers in separate containers and assemble each bowl just before serving, especially the greens and the sauces, as those will get soggy when stored with all the other ingredients.

BREAKFAST & SWEETS



EXTRA FUDGY COCONUT OIL BROWNIES



click [here](#) to see the recipe and photos on the blog!

ingredients

- 3/4 cup coconut oil (measured while solid)
- 4.5 ounces unsweetened chocolate
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup all purpose flour

directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Melt the coconut oil and the chocolate over very low, gentle heat.
2. Whisk the chocolate mixture in a bowl with the brown sugar. Whisk in the eggs until the mixture thickens, about 30 seconds. Stir in the flour and salt until just combined. The mixture will be oily and heavy.
3. Pour into a 9-inch square baking dish (mine was glass) and bake for 25-28 minutes. There may be a small amount of oil sitting on top or around the edges of the brownies - that's okay - it will reabsorb when you take them out of the oven. The less time you bake for, the more fudgy the brownies will be.
4. Let the brownies cool for a few hours or overnight for the most clean cut pieces (but let's be honest - you better break into those while they're still warm). The brownies should be fudgy and dense and delicious, almost like a cross between traditional brownies and little pieces of fudge.

INNER GODDESS RASPBERRY BREAKFAST BOWLS



click [here](#) to see the recipe and photos on the blog!

ingredients

- 10 ounces frozen mangoes or peaches
- 1 cup water
- 10 ounces frozen raspberries
- 1 cup light coconut milk
- 1/3 cup chia seeds
- 1/4 cup flaxmeal
- 1/4 cup honey
- a pinch of salt
- berries, granola, nuts, coconut, and cream for topping

directions

1. Soften the frozen fruit in the microwave or by leaving it out on the counter for a little while. Blend the peaches with the water. Blend the raspberries with the coconut milk.
2. Combine the two fruit puree mixtures and stir in the chia seeds, flax, honey, and salt. Let stand for 10-15 minutes to thicken.
3. Serve with toppings of your choice. Store leftovers in the fridge for up to three days - add water to leftovers to rehydrate (the chia seeds will soak up a lot of the moisture, making them super thick).

OUR FAVORITE COCONUT OIL GRANOLA



click [here](#) to see the recipe and photos on the blog!

notes

To ensure clustering, use 1 cup coconut oil and 1/4 cup honey. The more sticky the mixture, the more clustering will happen.

I made a few batches on parchment paper but I didn't like how those turned out with the oil sort of absorbing into the paper. If you have a nonstick baking sheet, I'd recommend going without parchment paper.

Be careful with the nuts! If you pulse them in a food processor and they get too fine, they'll make the granola dry because it almost acts like a flour. I recommend just roughly chopping or barely running them through your processor.

ingredients

DRY INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups rolled oats
- 1 heaping cup pecans, chopped roughly
- 1/2 to 3/4 cup pistachios, chopped roughly
- 1/2 cup white whole wheat flour
- 1/4 cup chia seeds
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup golden raisins

WET INGREDIENTS:

- 3/4 cup melted coconut oil (see notes)
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 2 tablespoons real maple syrup

directions

1. Preheat the oven to 250 degrees. Mix all the dry ingredients together (except the raisins - set aside for later). Whisk the wet ingredients until smooth. Combine the wet and the dry ingredients in a large bowl until the mixture is moistened.
2. Spread the mixture on the baking sheet in a thin layer (use two pans if necessary - I just use one 10x15 jelly roll pan).
3. Bake for one hour, stirring every 20 minutes. During the last 20 minutes of baking, stir in the golden raisins. When you remove the granola from the oven at the end, don't stir it right away - the granola will form crunchy clusters as it cools. Yum!

CREAMY SPINACH AND POTATO BREAKFAST CASSEROLE



click [here](#) to see the recipe and photos on the blog!

ingredients

- 1 1/2 tablespoon olive oil, divided
- 1/2 cup diced yellow onions
- 8 ounces raw 99% lean ground turkey
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 3 ounces fresh baby spinach leaves
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh sage
- 2 large eggs
- 1/3 cup fat free milk
- 2/3 cup grated raw potatoes, without skin
- 1/2 cup shredded low moisture Mozzarella cheese
- 2 tablespoons shredded Parmesan cheese
- salt and pepper to taste

directions

1. **PREPARE:** Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Grease a small 3-cup casserole dish or ovenproof skillet with nonstick spray.
2. **TURKEY:** Heat ½ tablespoon olive oil in a nonstick skillet over medium high heat. Add the onions and saute for 5 minutes or until soft and fragrant. Add the turkey, chili powder, and onion powder. Brown the meat until fully cooked and crumbled. Transfer to a bowl and set aside.
3. **SPINACH:** Add the remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil to the pan and reduce the heat to medium low. Add the garlic and sage. Saute for 2-3 minutes. Add the spinach and stir until wilted, about 2 minutes. Transfer to a bowl and set aside.
4. **EGGS:** In a mixing bowl, whisk the eggs and milk. Add the cooked turkey, spinach, potatoes, and Mozzarella cheese. Stir until combined. Transfer to the casserole dish. Top with the Parmesan cheese.
5. **BAKE:** Bake for 20-25 minutes or until the top is golden brown and the casserole springs back when touched. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

THE BEST SOFT CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES



click [here](#) to see the recipe and photos on the blog!

notes

If you find that the dough is wet and it REALLY sticks to your hands, you probably need a little more flour. This is important otherwise you'll have flat cookies. I'll usually add a few tablespoons at a time to get it to the right consistency. You should be able to roll the balls of dough between your hands without any issues.

ingredients

- 8 tablespoons of salted butter
- 1/2 cup white sugar (I like to use raw cane sugar with a coarser texture)
- 1/4 cup packed light brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 egg
- 1 1/2 cups all purpose flour (more as needed - see video)
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt (but I always add a little extra)
- 3/4 cup chocolate chips (I use a combination of chocolate chips and chocolate chunks)

directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Microwave the butter for about 40 seconds to just barely melt it. It shouldn't be hot - but it should be almost entirely in liquid form.
2. Using a stand mixer or electric beaters, beat the butter with the sugars until creamy. Add the vanilla and the egg; beat on low speed until just incorporated - 10-15 seconds or so (if you beat the egg for too long, the cookies will be stiff).
3. Add the flour, baking soda, and salt. Mix until crumbles form. Use your hands to press the crumbles together into a dough. It should form one large ball that is easy to handle (right at the stage between "wet" dough and "dry" dough). Add the chocolate chips and incorporate with your hands.
4. Roll the dough into 12 large balls (or 9 for HUGELY awesome cookies) and place on a cookie sheet. Bake for 9-11 minutes until the cookies look puffy and dry and just barely golden. Warning, friends: DO NOT OVERBAKE. This advice is probably written on every cookie recipe everywhere, but this is essential for keeping the cookies soft. Take them out even if they look like they're not done yet (see picture in the post). They'll be pale and puffy.
5. Let them cool on the pan for a good 30 minutes or so (I mean, okay, eat four or five but then let the rest of them cool). They will sink down and turn into these dense, buttery, soft cookies that are the best in all the land. These should stay soft for many days if kept in an airtight container. I also like to freeze them.

SNACKS & SAUCES



5 MINUTE MAGIC GREEN SAUCE



click [here](#) to see the recipe and photos on the blog!

notes

I did make this with other types of nuts like walnuts and almonds and it worked just fine, but the taste wasn't as good IMHO. If you can find shelled pistachios, it's worth the splurge!

ingredients

- 1 avocado
- 1 cup packed parsley and cilantro leaves (combined)
- 1 jalapeño, ribs and seeds removed
- 2 cloves garlic
- juice of one lime (or two - get lots of limey goodness in there!)
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup pistachios (you can sub other nuts - see notes)

directions

1. Pulse all ingredients - except pistachios - in a food processor until incorporated.
2. Add pistachios and pulse until mostly smooth (depends on what consistency you want).
3. Serve as a dip, spread, or sauce - or add additional water or oil to thin the sauce for use as a dressing or a marinade.

HEALTHY SWEET POTATO SKINS



click [here](#) to see the recipe and photos on the blog!

notes

I've also topped these with bacon!

For less stringy, more melty cheese, try Gouda!

ingredients

- 2 medium or large sweet potatoes
- 1 ½ tablespoons butter
- 1 shallot, minced
- 1 bag fresh baby spinach
- ¼ cup light sour cream
- 2 ounces light cream cheese
- 1 cup chickpeas
- ¼ cup shredded Mozzarella cheese
- salt and pepper to taste

directions

1. Bake sweet potatoes at 350 for 45-60 minutes, or until fork tender.
2. Cut sweet potatoes in half and let cool for 5-10 minutes. While sweet potatoes are cooling, saute the shallots with the butter over medium heat until translucent. Add fresh spinach and heat for 2-3 minutes, until spinach has cooked down. Set aside.
3. Scrape the sweet potato out of the peel, leaving a thin layer inside with the skin so that it can stand up on its own. Mash the sweet potato with the cream cheese and sour cream. Stir in chickpeas, spinach, and plenty of salt and pepper.
4. Coat potato skins with a drizzle of oil and bake for about 5 minutes to get a crispier outside. Remove from oven and fill each skin with the sweet potato mixture and top with shredded mozzarella cheese. Bake again for 10-15 minutes, or until cheese is melted and filling is heated through.

ROASTED VEGGIE PITAS WITH AVOCADO DIP



click [here](#) to see the recipe and photos on the blog!

notes

Omit the Greek yogurt to make this vegan.

ingredients

FOR THE AVOCADO DIP:

- 2 ripe avocados
- 1-2 cloves garlic (go for one clove or less if you're sensitive to strong garlic tastes)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons water (more as needed)
- a handful of cilantro
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- half of a Serrano pepper (more or less depending on how much heat you want)
- juice of one lime

FOR THE ROASTED VEGGIES:

- 2 heads cauliflower, cut into small florets
- 2 14-ounce cans chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- 1-2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1-2 teaspoons garam masala
- 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper if you want spicy
- oil oil for drizzling
- salt and pepper to taste
- 8 small whole wheat pitas
- Greek yogurt for topping

directions

1. **Veggies:** Preheat the oven to 425 degrees. Pat the cauliflower and chickpeas dry with paper towels. Arrange in a single layer on one large baking sheet or two baking sheets. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with spices. Give the pan a gentle shake to sort of mix things around. Roast for 15-20 minutes, stir, and roast for an additional 15-20 minutes. The cauliflower and chickpeas should be golden brown and the chickpeas will be semi-crunchy.
2. **Avocado Dip:** While the veggies are roasting, puree the avocado dip ingredients in a food processor. Set aside.
3. **Assembly:** Spread each pita with a spoonful of avocado dip and top with roasted veggies. Sprinkle with extra salt, pepper, cilantro, and a dollop of Greek yogurt.

5 MINUTE AVOCADO CILANTRO DRESSING



click [here](#) to see the recipe and photos on the blog!

notes

Recommended on the [Spicy Southwestern Salad!](#)

ingredients

- half an avocado
- 1/4 cup Greek yogurt
- 1/2 cup water (more as needed to adjust consistency)
- 1 cup cilantro leaves and stems
- 1 small clove of garlic
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- a squeeze of lime juice

directions

1. Pulse all ingredients in a food processor or blender until smooth. Voila!

pinch *of* yum

TOP RECIPES *of* 2015

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- tieghan from halfbakedharvest.com

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