



Grokker

Mediterranean Eating

with Sue Mah

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WELCOME TO YOUR MEDITERRANEAN EATING PROGRAM

This 21-day program will guide you towards adopting a healthier outlook when it comes to eating, cooking, and nutrition, using a Mediterranean-style eating plan that's been proven effective time and time again.

A traditional diet that's evolved over 5,000 years, Mediterranean eating is about enjoying a simple diet based on nutrient-dense, wholesome foods. It's about savoring the flavors of foods and making the most of the fresh foods available to us.

From reducing inflammation, increasing life span, getting to a healthy weight, and improving your brain function, there's a lot to love when it comes to the benefits of eating the Mediterranean way.

During the first week, we'll look at each element of Mediterranean eating one at a time, from healthy fats to dairy. Each day you'll make a simple swap to your diet so that by weeks 2 and 3, you'll be putting all your new knowledge into action.

From there, it's about exploring Mediterranean cuisine in delicious recipes that you can make in just 15 minutes.

WHAT IS MEDITERRANEAN EATING?

The Mediterranean Diet emphasizes eating foods like fish, fruits, vegetables, beans, high-fiber breads and whole grains, nuts, seeds, and olive oil. These foods are rich in fiber and healthy fats like the monounsaturated fats and omega-3 fats.

Fatty meats and sweets are enjoyed in limited amounts; a couple of times per week at most.

Foods that are highly processed, or high in sugars, refined carbohydrates, or unhealthy fats are limited. Think foods like: chips, cookies, cake, and white bread.

Red wine is enjoyed socially during meals, and sitting down to enjoy meals with loved ones is a key part of the Mediterranean diet too.

ABOUT



SUE MAH, MHSC, RD, PHEC

As an award winning Registered Dietitian and daughter of a chef, Sue has a natural passion for delicious, wholesome food! She is Founder of Nutrition Solutions in Toronto Canada, specializing in creative nutrition communications. Known for her infectious energy, Sue has appeared in hundreds of media features. She is also Co-founder of two companies: Nutrition for NON-Nutritionists & Media Training Boot Camp. Sue offers nutrition training & media coaching, and teaches at Ryerson University.

WHAT IS FAT?

Fats give us energy as well as help our bodies absorb important fat-soluble vitamins. Fat also adds flavor to food and helps us feel full.

There are 3 main types of fats in our food: Unsaturated fats, saturated fats, and trans fats.

Unsaturated fats are heart-healthy fats because they can improve your blood cholesterol level and lower your risk for cardiovascular disease.

MONO-unsaturated fats are found in foods like nuts and avocados and also in different oils like olive oil, peanut oil and sunflower oil.

POLY-unsaturated fats include omega-3 fats and omega-6 fats. Omega-3 fats are also found in walnuts, flax seeds, chia seeds and hemp seeds. Omega-6 fats are also found in nuts, seeds, and vegetable oils like soybean oil and sunflower oil.

Saturated fats tend to be solid at room temperature and are less healthy for us. They're naturally found in foods from animals such as fatty cuts of meat, the skin on poultry, shortening, and higher fat dairy products.

Trans fats are the last type. Very small amounts of natural trans fats are found in milk and meat. No need to worry about this natural type of trans fat. But the artificial or industry-made trans fats can increase our risk of heart disease and stroke.

These artificial trans fats are created by adding hydrogen to liquid vegetable oils to make them more solid. These types of trans fats can be found in processed foods such as commercially baked goods and fried foods. Due to health concerns, many countries around the world have banned the use of industry-made trans fats, or have put limits on the amount of trans fats allowed in foods.

HOMEWORK

Add more healthy unsaturated fats in your diet and reduce the amount of saturated and trans fats. Check out the next page for some tips!

TRADE SATURATED FATS FOR UNSATURATED

Now that you understand the types of fat found in food, here are 10 ways to add more healthy unsaturated fats to your diet:

1. Swap a bagel and cream cheese for a slice of avocado toast on whole grain bread
2. Snack on nuts and seeds instead of ready-made pastries, cookies or donuts
3. Drizzle Extra Virgin Olive Oil on bread or potatoes instead of using butter
4. Trade creamy salad dressing for your own homemade salad dressing using olive oil, garlic, herbs, lemon juice or vinegar
5. Go for grilled skinless chicken instead of fried chicken
6. Replace some of the meat in your recipe with fish, beans, tofu or veggies
7. Cook or bake with oil instead of butter, lard or shortening
8. Enjoy fruit salad for dessert and save the ice cream for special occasions
9. Pack olives for an on-the-go snack instead of chips or crackers
10. Try pasta with an olive oil, tomato or tahini sauce instead of a creamy sauce

EAT THE RAINBOW

Eating a Mediterranean diet means enjoying a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables and cutting down on sugary, processed foods.

Eating more fruits and vegetables is such a healthy habit. They provide fiber, vitamins, minerals, and disease-fighting antioxidants.

They can also help lower blood pressure, reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke, lower your risk of digestive problems, and help balance your blood sugar levels.

Tip: Try for at least 2 servings of veggies and 1 serving of fruit at every meal. Essentially, half your plate should be fruits and veggies at each meal.

Here are some fruits and vegetables to try on the Mediterranean diet. Eating a variety is key since you can't get all the nutrition you need from a single fruit or vegetable.



VEGETABLES

Tomatoes, broccoli, kale, spinach, onions, cauliflower, carrots, Brussels sprouts, cucumbers, artichokes, beets, eggplants, leeks and mushrooms

FRUITS

Apples, apricots, avocado, oranges, pears, strawberries, grapes, dates, figs, melons, peaches and olives

PROCESSED FOODS

Surprise! Some processed foods that are just fine to enjoy. Technically, any food that has been frozen, canned, dried, baked, or pasteurized can be called “processed.”

And these are great options to include during this program. For example, low sodium canned vegetables in soups and pasta dishes, and frozen fruit is perfect for smoothies.

On the other hand, what to look out for are ultra-processed foods like pre-packaged meals and packaged snacks that tend to be high in sugars, artificial flavors, refined carbohydrates, and unhealthy trans fats.

Here are some examples of ultra-processed foods to minimize while following a Mediterranean diet:

- Frozen or ready-made meals
- Baked goods like cakes and pastries
- Processed cheese products
- Sweetened breakfast cereals
- Crackers and chips
- Candy and ice cream
- instant noodles and high sodium canned soups
- Sodas and other sweetened drinks

HOMEWORK

From today on you're choosing healthy fats, and more fruits and vegetables for the rest of the program. These small changes will make a big impact in the long run.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT CARBS

Carbohydrates can sometimes get a bad wrap, but it's ok and actually recommended to eat *whole grain* carbs on the Mediterranean Diet.

Compared to processed grains, whole grains are higher in certain nutrients and fiber. They can help reduce inflammation, and even support healthy digestion.

If you'd like an in-depth science lesson on the benefits of whole grains vs. processed, check out Sue's [Bread and Grains Reset](#) video.

Here are 10 healthy Mediterranean-inspired grains to enjoy every day:

1. **WHOLE OATS** are great for breakfast with berries and nuts. Try making a savory dish by taking cooked oats and top it with a fried egg, tomatoes and feta cheese.
2. **BROWN RICE** has more nutrition than white rice, and pairs well with grilled salmon and roasted vegetables for a nutritious dinner.
3. **RYE** is loaded with fiber and makes for a hearty sandwich. Try adding some rye flour to your baking recipes too.
4. **FARRO** is a nutrient-packed ancient grain that has a nutty flavour and can be used instead of white rice in soups and grain-based salads.
5. **CORN** is a great addition to pastas, soups and salads where you're looking for a little added sweetness and texture.
6. **BUCKWHEAT FLOUR** can be used to make homemade pancakes - add some berries, bananas and Greek yogurt on top. Yum!
7. **WHOLE WHEAT BREAD** is one of the easiest swaps to make. If you like eating sandwiches or toast, swap out white bread for a whole grain option.
8. **WHOLE GRAIN PASTA** instead of refined pasta. It not only adds nutrients, but also provides a subtle nutty flavor to your dishes. Healthier and more flavor!
9. **BULGUR** is another wonderful whole grain as a side dish. Make a bulgur pilaf with added dried fruit or use it in soups and salads.
10. **QUINOA** is technically a seed, but because of its versatility and higher protein content it's great in recipes like [Mediterranean Quinoa Bowls with Roasted Red Peppers](#).

THE MAGIC OF BEANS

A legume might sound fancy, but it's just any plant that produces a pod with seeds inside. You've probably heard of some of the most common edible legumes like lentils, peas, chickpeas, beans, soybeans, and peanuts.

They're a great plant-based ingredient, affordable and so versatile.

And did you know that legumes draw nitrogen from the air back into the soil which reduces the need to add fertilizers? That's good for our environment!

They're also packed with nutrition, protein, and fiber; and they have practically no saturated fat.

From a health perspective, all legumes can help improve blood pressure, reduce your blood cholesterol, lower your risk of heart disease, and help you manage your weight.

While enjoying the Mediterranean diet, Sue recommends incorporating them into your meals at least twice per week.

If you're not used to eating beans or legumes, then you'll probably notice that you might have a little more gas than usual.

But don't worry, here are 3 tips that can help:

1. Start slowly. A cup of legumes can have up to 12 grams of fiber, which is a lot if you're not used to it. Start by eating a small amount of legumes, about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup, and slowly add more.
2. Drink more water and fluids. This will help all that fiber do its job and reduce the gassiness.
3. Soak dried beans and then cook them in fresh water. For canned beans, rinse them under water to get rid of any extra salt and wash away some of the gassiness.

Homework: Keep choosing healthy fats, more fruits and veggies, and whole grains every day. Now, add more legumes to your diet too.
Aim for at least 1-2 servings per week.

FISH, POULTRY, SEAFOOD, AND EGGS

The Mediterranean way of eating focuses on lots of fresh fish, seafood, poultry, eggs and beans rather than meat. This is probably because fresh fish and seafood are so readily available by the sea.

Now if you love red meat, don't worry. You can still enjoy lean red meat in moderation while following the Mediterranean diet. Red meat includes beef, pork, lamb and goat. Try to aim for red meat a few times a month or about 1 serving per week during this program. Choose lean cuts with little marbling, such as tenderloin, sirloin and flank steak, and try to keep the portions small; about 3 to 4 ounces.

Here are 5 ways to enjoy more Fish, Seafood, Poultry and Eggs in your Diet.

1. Instead of steak and potatoes, how about shish kabobs or souvlaki? You can choose fish, chicken or lean beef and make them with onions, and red, orange and green peppers. Add a side of quinoa and you've got dinner ready to go.
2. Craving a burger? Make it a salmon burger on a whole wheat bun. Pair it with a Greek salad with cucumbers, tomatoes and feta cheese for a really tasty meal.
3. Instead of spaghetti and meatballs, give Pasta Puttanesca a try. Tomatoes, olives, onions and garlic make the base of this tasty sauce. You can add shrimp, clams and mussels too for some protein and choose whole wheat pasta for an added kick of fiber.
4. Give eggs a try instead of breakfast meats. Scrambled, poached, hard boiled, as a quiche...there are many SO ways to enjoy this versatile food.
5. Mediterranean Chicken Stew makes a cozy alternative to traditional beef stew. Lots of veggies and an herb-y broth make for a delicious dinner over cooked bulgur or brown rice.



FISH, POULTRY, SEAFOOD, AND EGGS CONTINUED

Now that we've covered healthy swaps to make for fats, protein, grains, and processed foods, let's take a look at what sample day of eating looks like at this point in the program.

Seeing and hearing these sample menus can help you plan out your shopping trips and gives you ideas for what to cook during the week.

Breakfast

- One or two fried or poached eggs on whole wheat toast and avocado

Lunch

- A leafy green salad - with cherry tomatoes, cucumbers, olives, feta cheese and grilled chicken or chickpeas - with a dressing of olive oil and vinegar. Add a whole-grain pita on the side with hummus.

Dinner

- Baked, grilled or broiled fish - served over a bed of brown rice or bulgur - with grilled eggplant, zucchini and red peppers. Add in a glass of red wine if you're in the mood for one.

Dessert

- Fresh berries with some plain Greek yogurt

Sounds like a delicious day!



Welcome back! We're closing out our first week together.

Now that you're well versed on Mediterranean eating, hopefully you're getting excited to spend some time in the kitchen making delicious recipes. But first, let's look at the deal with dairy when it comes to Mediterranean eating.

Compared to the Western diet, Mediterranean eating doesn't include much milk, but cheese, and yogurt are enjoyed in moderate amounts.

Aim for about 2 servings of low fat dairy products a day and you can even go up to 4 servings a day.

Here are Sue's 5 favorite dairy products to enjoy on the Mediterranean diet:

1. Sprinkle feta cheese over your favourite salad to add extra depth and flavor. Try making an arugula salad with grilled peaches, toasted pecans and crumbled feta on top! Or make an easy Greek salad with diced cucumbers, tomatoes and feta cheese.
2. Add a spoonful of creamy Greek yogurt on top of soup like sweet potato or butternut squash soup. It will give the soup a nice creaminess.
3. Finish roasted vegetables with a shaving of fresh Parmesan cheese, a pinch of pepper and a squeeze of fresh lemon juice.
4. Serve raw veggies, pita chips or meat kebabs with Tzatziki dip. Tzatziki is a thick dip made from Greek yogurt and cucumber, and it's absolutely delicious!
5. For the perfect snack or dessert, grab a few pieces of cheese, some fresh or dried fruit and a handful of nuts.

MEAL PLANNING

We've now covered most of the components of the Mediterranean diet and you've been taking small steps each day to eat healthier the Mediterranean way. Now it's time to put your knowledge into practice by implementing ways to create a well-balanced week of eating that's full of feel-good ingredients, but doesn't feel restrictive.

Meal planning is a great way to get started without feeling overwhelmed. Here's Sue's 3-step method for planning a week of Mediterranean eating:

STEP 1: MAKE A MENU

Decide what you'll eat over the next few days or week, depending on how often you like to shop. Sue likes to shop a couple of times a week so we'll use that as an example. Over the next few days she plans to have Greek Yogurt with fruits, nuts and honey for breakfast; for lunch, she'll have salmon pita sandwiches and salads; and for dinner, pasta and chicken shawarma. You can use the [menu](#) on the next page as a guide.

STEP 2: MAKE A LIST AND START PLANNING

Take a look at what you already have at home and make a [shopping list](#) of the ingredients you need. This will help you keep on track and not forget anything.

Since there's a big focus on fresh ingredients on the Mediterranean diet, be flexible depending on what looks good that day. If there's a sale on fresh green beans for example, and you had planned on broccoli for dinner, then feel free to mix it up.

STEP 3: MEAL PREP

Cut up fresh fruits and vegetables ahead of time for salads and snacks. Roast or steam a big batch of veggies so that they're ready to reheat for dinner. Cook a couple of grains ahead of time. Prepare any marinades and marinate meat and chicken in advance.

This is your time to do anything that will help get dinner on the table on those busy days when you're rushing out the door in the morning or when you're just too tired after a long day and don't want to spend too much time in the kitchen. Find the shortcuts that work best for you!

MEAL PLANNING

WEEKLY MENU

Use this space to write out what you plan to eat for the week.

MONDAY

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
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TUESDAY

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
-----------	-------	--------

WEDNESDAY

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
-----------	-------	--------

THURSDAY

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
-----------	-------	--------

FRIDAY

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
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SATURDAY

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
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SUNDAY

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
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SHOPPING LIST

Use this guide to build your shopping list before heading to the grocery store. Making a list ahead of time cuts down on impulse purchases while browsing.

<u>Protein</u>	<u>Beverages</u>	<u>Dairy</u>	<u>Pantry</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Chicken - whole, breasts or thighs	<input type="checkbox"/> Coffee	<input type="checkbox"/> Plain Greek yogurt	<input type="checkbox"/> Olives
<input type="checkbox"/> Lean cuts of steak - sirloin, top round roast, bottom round roast, and top sirloin	<input type="checkbox"/> Tea	<input type="checkbox"/> Feta cheese	<input type="checkbox"/> Canned tuna
<input type="checkbox"/> Fish - salmon, halibut, cod, etc	<input type="checkbox"/> Sparkling water	<input type="checkbox"/> Parmesan cheese	<input type="checkbox"/> Canned Salmon
<input type="checkbox"/> Seafood - shrimp, scallops, clams, etc	<input type="checkbox"/> Seltzer water	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Dried fruit
<input type="checkbox"/> Beans - kidney, black, garbanzo, lima, etc	<input type="checkbox"/> Red wine	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Barley
<input type="checkbox"/> Lentils	<input type="checkbox"/> _____		<input type="checkbox"/> Quinoa
<input type="checkbox"/> Eggs		<u>Spices/Seasonings</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Whole wheat pasta
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<u>Produce</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Kosher or sea salt	<input type="checkbox"/> Whole grain bread
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Onions	<input type="checkbox"/> Black pepper	<input type="checkbox"/> Balsamic vinegar
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> 3-5 in-season fruits	<input type="checkbox"/> Garlic powder	<input type="checkbox"/> Red wine vinegar
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> 3-5 in-season vegetables including at least one leafy green like spinach, kale or arugula	<input type="checkbox"/> Cayenne pepper	<input type="checkbox"/> Extra-virgin olive oil
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Lemons and/or limes	<input type="checkbox"/> Cumin	<input type="checkbox"/> Tomatoes (diced or crushed)
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Oregano	<input type="checkbox"/> Low sodium beans
	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Coriander	<input type="checkbox"/> Artichoke hearts
	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
		<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

FOOD GUIDE

This is a comprehensive list of Mediterranean staples to enjoy during and after the program. Don't see a food that's listed? A quick online search will let you know if it's recommended on the Mediterranean diet.

OLIVE OIL, OLIVES, VINEGARS

Extra virgin olive oil, olives, balsamic vinegar, red wine vinegar

VEGETABLES

Onions, garlic, potatoes, artichokes, zucchini, eggplant, squash, corn, cucumbers, broccoli, cauliflower, mushrooms, beets, carrots, celery, peppers, fennel, cabbage, leeks

NUTS & SEEDS

Pine nuts, walnuts, almonds, chestnuts, sesame seeds, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, tahini

HERBS & SPICES

Parsley, oregano, basil, dill, thyme, sage, rosemary, mint, bay leaves, salt, pepper, cumin, ginger, turmeric, saffron, paprika, cinnamon, cloves, red pepper flakes

BEANS & LEGUMES

Lentils, split peas, chickpeas, kidney beans, green beans, black beans, black eyed beans

CHEESE & FERMENTED DAIRY

Feta cheese, mozzarella, parmesan, ricotta, yogurt, kefir

GREENS

Spinach, arugula, lettuce, kale, broccoli, beet greens, collard greens

WHOLE GRAINS, PASTA & RICE

Whole wheat pasta, bulgar wheat, quinoa, brown rice, orzo, barley, whole grain bread and pita, whole oats, farro, corn

PROTEINS

Sardines, anchovies, salmon, sea bass, cod, halibut, tuna, mussels and clams, shrimp, grass fed beef or pork, skin-off chicken, eggs, lamb, goat

FRUIT

Grapes, tomatoes, lemons, oranges, grapefruit, apricots, apples, pears, pomegranate, cherries, avocado, watermelon, honeydew, peaches, strawberries, figs, kiwi

DRINKS

Water, coffee, tea, red wine, fresh juice

Before exploring the recipes, let's look at two remaining facets of the Mediterranean lifestyle; alcohol and lifestyle tips. Here's what you need to know:

ALCOHOL

Drinking red wine in moderate amounts is an important component of the Mediterranean diet, and in fact, has been shown to have health benefits. The keys to these benefits are to enjoy red wine as part of the meal and to enjoy it in moderation. So what does moderation mean? For women, it's 1 glass of red wine a day, and for men, 2 glasses. Anything more than that and the risks can outweigh the benefits.

White wine, beer or hard liquor can be enjoyed in moderation if you like, but they're not part of the traditional Mediterranean diet.

LIFESTYLE

1. Eat together. Food is love, joy and celebration. And eating is a social event! Research shows that families who eat together actually eat better. So enjoy a good meal in the company of your friends and family as often as you can!
- 2: Savor and enjoy your food. Take time to eat slowly and don't rush. You've probably heard it before, but distracted eating is not mindful eating. Countless studies have shown the benefits of turning off your TV and phone during meal time. Eat with your senses and really appreciate the taste, texture and smell of food.
3. Get physical exercise every day even if it's just walking. A healthy body is a body that moves. The key to keeping active is finding what you like to do! Try out different types of activities - walking, running, swimming, cycling, tennis, yoga or dancing, they're all great!
4. Enjoy the process. Remember, the Mediterranean diet is not about perfection or restricting foods completely. So do you have to totally give up red meat? Not at all! Can you still have a piece of cake every now and then? **ABSOLUTELY!**

Caprese Avocado Toast (2 servings)

Ingredients

- 2 slices of whole grain bread
- 8-10 grape tomatoes
- ~12 bite-sized mozzarella balls or you can slice larger rounds of fresh mozzarella
- 4 large fresh basil leaves
- 1 small to medium sized avocado
- 2 tablespoons of balsamic vinegar
- salt and pepper

Directions

1. Start by toasting the bread.
2. Chop the tomatoes, Mozzarella and basil into small, bite-sized pieces.
3. Mash the avocado in a bowl, and add a little salt and pepper.
4. Spread the mashed avocado over the toast. Then add the chopped tomatoes, mozzarella and basil on top.
5. Add a little drizzle of balsamic vinegar to finish things off.



*If you're not a fan of tuna, try egg salad or another protein like canned salmon, tofu, cooked ground chicken, beef, pork or turkey.

Greek Yogurt with Honey, Walnuts and Fruit (1 serving)

Ingredients

- ~1 cup of unsweetened Greek yogurt
- 1 cup of fruit, whatever you have on hand
- A handful of walnuts, either raw or toasted
- A drizzle of honey

Directions

1. Dish yogurt into a bowl. Adjust the portion to your liking.
2. Prepare your fruit. We used berries for this recipe. Rinse and slice the berries.
3. Add them on top of the yogurt.
4. Add a small handful of walnuts, about ¼ cup.
5. The final touch is a little drizzle of honey.



*You can use a variety of fruit for this recipe, whatever's in season. Bananas, figs, apricots and nectarines...whatever you have on hand is great.

Mediterranean Breakfast Salad (1 serving)

Ingredients

- 1 to 2 eggs
- 2 cups of arugula or spinach
- Handful of cherry tomatoes or large tomatoes cut into wedges
- Seedless cucumber, chopped
- Cooked quinoa, cooled
- A few slices of avocado
- Handful of chopped almonds
- Chopped mixed herbs like mint and parsley
- Extra virgin olive oil
- A squeeze of lemon juice
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Directions

1. Start by cooking your quinoa. Go ahead and make a little extra to use in other recipes. Then, get your egg going. For soft-boiled eggs, place the uncooked eggs in a small pot of cold water, making sure that there's at least 1 inch of water over them. Cover with a lid and bring water to a boil on high heat. Once the water has boiled, turn off the heat and immediately remove the pot from the heat. Let eggs sit in the water for about 5 or 6 minutes.
2. Plate your washed greens then chop the tomatoes and cucumbers. If you have time before the eggs are done, add the greens, quinoa, tomatoes and cucumbers into a large bowl. Drizzle everything with olive oil, and season with salt and pepper; then toss. If you plan to take this for lunch, wait until you're ready to eat before adding the dressing.
3. Top your salad with sliced avocado, and your eggs. Then sprinkle herbs and almonds over top. Season with a little more salt and pepper and a squeeze of lemon juice, and enjoy!



Spanakopita Egg Pitas (4 servings)

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 cups of fresh spinach, chopped
- Pinch of salt
- 8 large eggs, beaten
- ¼ cup crumbled feta cheese
- Freshly ground pepper to taste
- 8 teaspoons sun-dried tomato tapenade or sun-dried tomato pesto
- 4 whole-wheat pitas cut in half

Directions

1. Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add the spinach and salt and cook until wilted, stirring occasionally. Add eggs and cook, stirring the eggs for about 4 to 5 minutes. Add feta and pepper and cook until the eggs set.
- 2.
3. Spread tapenade or pesto inside pita pockets, 2 teaspoons per pita. Divide the egg mixture among the pitas and serve.



Mediterranean Cobb Salad (4 servings)

Ingredients

- 2 large heads of romaine lettuce
- 4 hard boiled eggs, sliced
- 1 can of low sodium chickpeas
- 3 medium tomatoes, sliced
- 1 large avocado, sliced
- 1 cucumber, sliced
- 1 cup artichoke hearts
- 1 cup feta cheese
- 1/2 cup sliced roasted red bell pepper
- 1/2 cup sliced kalamata olives
- 1/2 cup chopped parsley
- 1/4 cup sliced red onion
- 1/2 cup of a home-made Greek salad dressing

Directions

1. Wash and chop all the vegetables into bite-sized pieces.
2. Rinse the chickpeas under water to remove excess salt and gas.
3. Prepare your dressing by whisking together: 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil, 1/4 cup red wine vinegar, 1 teaspoon of garlic powder, 1 teaspoon dry mustard, 1 teaspoon dried thyme, 1 teaspoon dried oregano, 1/4 teaspoon salt, and ground black pepper.
4. Add your veggies to a large bowl or plate individually, then drizzle with dressing.



Salmon Pita Sandwich (1 serving)

Ingredients

- 3 ounces of canned salmon, drained
- 1/3 cup chopped cucumber
- 1/4 cup plain Greek yogurt
- 1/4 cup shredded carrots
- 2 tablespoons thinly sliced red onion
- A squeeze of lemon juice
- A pinch of salt and pepper
- A bit of chopped parsley
- 1 small tomato, sliced
- 1 large whole wheat pita pocket

Directions

1. If you're using canned salmon, drain off the liquid. You can also use the pouches that have less liquid in them.
2. Chop your veggies.
3. In a bowl combine salmon, cucumber, yogurt, red onion and carrots, and parsley.
4. Add a squeeze of lemon, and salt and pepper to your liking. Stir that up nice and good!
5. The next step is for when you're ready to eat. If you're packing this for lunch later in the day, place this mixture in an airtight container and build your pita when you're ready to eat. Add some tomato slices to each pita half and then fill it with the mixture. Enjoy this sandwich with a piece of fresh fruit for a well-rounded lunch.



*If you're not a fan of salmon you could always use canned tuna, canned chicken or chickpeas for this recipe.

Mediterranean Bento Box (1 serving)

Ingredients

- A variety of fresh vegetables (cherry tomatoes, baby bell peppers, cucumber, carrots)
- Whole grain pita bread
- Whipped ricotta cheese dip or hummus
- Olives
- A handful of nuts
- Dried apricots
- Clementines

Directions

1. Gathering your ingredients and chop the vegetables,
2. And assemble the box! It's that simple. Have fun with these boxes. You can use leftover roasted veggies, chicken or fish from last night's dinner, marinated artichokes...anything you have on hand that gives you a nice balance of veggies, fruit and protein to enjoy a balanced lunch.



Mini Fish Cakes (Makes 15-18 cakes)

Ingredients

- 2, 4 oz tins of sardines packed in chili oil
- ½ cup plain yogurt
- ½ cup Panko breadcrumbs
- 1 tsp thyme
- 2 tsp Old Bay seasoning
- 1 egg

Directions

1. Remove sardines from tin, reserving oil, and place fish in a mixing bowl. Add remaining fish cake ingredients, along with the oil from one tin (about 2 tablespoons) to the bowl.
2. Gently mix all the ingredients together with a fork. Mix until incorporated.
3. Use a spoon to scoop the mix into small balls. Roll each ball in your hands, and then flatten into small patties 2" across, and about ½" thick.
4. Set patties on a rimmed baking sheet, and refrigerate for 20-30 mins.
5. Pan fry your patties over medium-high heat for a few minutes each side until golden brown.

You can serve this with a salad or over rice and veggies for lunch or dinner!



Mediterranean Baked Cod (4 servings)

Ingredients

- 1 ½ pounds of cod fillet
- 1 small red onion
- 3 cloves of crushed garlic
- 1 pound of cherry tomatoes halved
- ¼ cup black olives
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- Salt & pepper to taste
- ¼ cup white wine OR water

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Lightly grease a 9 inch x13 inch baking dish.
3. Slice onions thinly and cut cherry tomatoes in half. Chop the garlic.
4. Place the fish in the bottom of the dish and scatter the onion, garlic, tomatoes and olives around it.
5. Drizzle olive oil over everything and sprinkle it with the Italian seasoning. Finish by seasoning with a little salt and pepper to your liking.
6. Pour your water or wine into the baking dish and bake it for 15-20 minutes, or until the tomatoes and fish are cooked through.



15-Minute Mediterranean Pasta (4 servings)

Ingredients

- 8 ounces whole grain spaghetti or your favorite noodle like capellini or angel hair pasta
- 1 clove of garlic
- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- Juice from half a lemon
- 1/3 cup Kalamata olives
- 1/2 cup sun-dried tomatoes
- A 10-ounce can or jar of artichoke hearts
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup crumbled feta cheese

Directions

1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Once it's boiling, add that spaghetti to the pot and cook according to the box.
2. While the spaghetti is cooking, get your other ingredients ready. Chop the kalamata olives. Quarter your artichoke hearts.
3. Chop that parsley and chop your garlic in half or quarters so that everything is ready to go.
4. Add your garlic and olive oil to a small pan on medium-low heat. Once it starts to get hot, turn it down to a simmer and cook it for about 5 minutes until the garlic looks golden brown. Now, turn the heat off and scoop the garlic out with a spoon. Save the oil for pouring over the pasta.
5. Drain your spaghetti once it's done cooking and put it into a serving bowl.
6. Add everything, except the feta cheese to the bowl and toss it all to combine. Don't forget that flavored oil!
7. Add about 3/4 of the feta and toss the pasta gently. You can reserve the rest of the feta cheese for serving at the table.



Chicken Shawarma (4 servings)

Ingredients

- 2lb chicken thigh fillets or breasts, skinless and boneless

For the marinade you'll need:

- 1 large garlic clove, minced
- 1 tbsp ground coriander
- 1 tbsp ground cumin
- 1 tbsp ground cardamom
- 1 tsp ground cayenne pepper (reduce to 1/2 tsp to make it not spicy)
- 2 tsp smoked paprika
- 2 tsp salt
- Black pepper
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 3 tbsp olive oil

For the Yogurt Sauce you'll need:

- 1 cup Greek yoghurt
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 1 tsp cumin
- Squeeze of lemon juice
- Salt and pepper

To serve this dish:

- 6 flatbreads (flatbread or pita bread)
- Sliced lettuce
- Tomato slices
- OR
- Salad with greens and vegetables

Directions

1. Combine all the marinade ingredients in a large bowl. Then, add the chicken and make sure each piece is coated well.
2. Marinate the chicken overnight or up to 24 hours.
3. When ready to cook, combine the yogurt sauce ingredients in a bowl and mix. Cover it and put in the fridge until you're ready to serve dinner.
4. Heat a large pan on the stove over medium high heat (you can also grill the chicken).
5. Put a little olive oil in the pan to prevent sticking and place your chicken in the pan. Cook the first side for about 5 to 6 minutes until you get a good char....Flip them over and cook about the same on the other side to finish.
6. Once your chicken is cooked thoroughly, let it rest on a plate until you're ready to serve it. You can put the chicken in a pita and serve it with lettuce, tomatoes and yogurt sauce, or you can add this to a bowl with leafy greens, cucumbers, tomatoes and the yogurt sauce.



Chickpea Stew (4 servings)

Ingredients

- 1 can of chickpeas, drained
- 1 onion
- 2 cloves of garlic
- 2 carrots
- 1 red pepper
- 1 zucchini
- 5-6 mushrooms
- Handful of spinach
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp oregano
- ¼-½ tsp chili powder
- 1 can low sodium stewed or chopped tomatoes
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions

1. Dice your vegetables into bite-sized pieces.
2. Sauté the diced onion, garlic, carrots, red pepper, and zucchini in olive oil until carrots just begin to soften, about 5-6 minutes.
3. Add the chopped mushrooms, spinach, cumin, oregano and a little chili powder. Cook until the spinach is wilted.
4. Add a can of rinsed chickpeas and a can of low sodium stewed tomatoes. Simmer for 10-15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Season with salt and pepper to taste.



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Quinoa Bowls With Roasted Red Peppers (4 servings)

Ingredients

- Quinoa
- Jarred, roasted red peppers
- Spinach or kale
- Cucumber
- Tomatoes
- Feta cheese
- Avocado, sliced
- Kalamata olives
- Pepperoncini
- Thinly sliced red onion
- Hummus
- Fresh basil or parsley
- Olive oil
- lemon juice
- Salt and pepper

Directions

1. Start by cooking the quinoa according to package directions. You can do this in a rice cooker if you have one or on the stove. 1 cup of uncooked quinoa makes about 4 servings.
2. While that's cooking, chop your vegetables into bite-sized pieces.
3. In a separate bowl stir together the olive oil, lemon juice, salt and pepper. For each serving, use 1 tbsp of olive oil, a squeeze of lemon juice, and a pinch each of salt and pepper.
4. When the quinoa is done, it's time to build your bowl!
5. Start with a base of quinoa and add on the other ingredients. Then, just mix everything together, serve, and enjoy.



15-Minute Greek Chicken (4 servings)

Ingredients

- 4 skinless chicken breasts
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 onion, finely diced
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 2 tsp dried oregano
- 1 can of tomato puree
- 1/2 tsp sugar
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes
- 3/4 cup olives
- 1/2 cup feta cheese
- 4 pita pocket breads, to serve

Directions

1. Season the chicken with salt and pepper.
2. Heat 1/2 the oil in a large frying pan over medium- high heat. Add the chicken and sear for about 2-3 minutes each side or until browned and cooked through. Transfer to a plate.
3. Add remaining oil to pan and add the onion, garlic and dried oregano. Cook, stirring, for 2 minutes. Add tomato puree, sugar, tomatoes and olives.
4. Bring to a simmer and cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
5. Season with salt and pepper, then return chicken to pan. Cook for 1 to 2 minutes or until chicken is heated through. Sprinkle with feta. Top with fresh oregano. Serve with pita bread.



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