

TCoB Cookbook



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Welcome

Thank you to everyone who submitted your recipes. We can all add more recipes and favourites next season.

Categories

Breakfast

This category is dedicated to fuelling you through the morning workouts and re-fueling you afterwards.

Recovery Snacks

This category is all about healthy snacks. Homemade protein bars and great after workout solid food.

Salads & Soups

No explanation necessary. Full meal salads, side salads, dressings and slaws can all be found here. Fresh homemade soups to keep you warm.

Load Me Up Dinner

This category is intended for your favourite power meal to be consumed the day before a tough workout or pre-race day food.

Desserts

Sweet and savory treats are found here. Or also known as the #1 reason to train.

Breakfast

Spelt Pancakes

These are Shawna Button's preferred fuel for race day

Ingredients

1 cup large-flake oatmeal
1 cup stone-ground spelt flour
1-1.5 cups water (enough to make the mix wet, but not runny.)
3-4 Tbsp plain organic yogurt (plain organic yogurt has no sugar and lots of active bacteria)

2 eggs, beaten with a fork
1 tsp baking powder
1 tsp baking soda

Spices of choice
Fruit of choice

Instructions

The night before:

1. Mix oatmeal, flour, water and yogurt together
2. Let sit for 8-12 hours, or more at room temperature

Next Day:

1. Mix in eggs, baking powder and baking soda
2. Add optional spices like cinnamon, nutmeg, vanilla, nuts to taste
3. Add more water if needed to give mixture slightly running consistency
4. Cook in buttered frypan or on open griddle on medium to medium high heat
5. Sprinkle in fruit as it cooks on one side; blueberries, strawberries, apple pieces
6. Once bubble start to appear – flip
7. Remove from heat once set and serve

Flax Seed Muffin in a mug!!

Samantha Armstrong says this is super healthy and a fast baked good!

Ingredients

1/3 cup of ground flax seed
1/2 tsp baking powder
1 tsp cinnamon
1tsp of honey or stevia - whichever you prefer
1 large beaten egg
1tsp vanilla

Special Equipment

Microwave safe mug – this is VERY IMPORTANT



Instructions

1. Combine flax seed, baking powder and cinnamon in your mug and whisk with a fork
2. Mix in egg, honey/stevia and vanilla
3. Microwave in middle of rotating plate for 1 min, some microwaves might take 1 min 10 seconds
4. Turn upside down, slice and enjoy! Spread on your fav nut butter for added flavor.

Breakfast Burrito

Sam Armstrong says who doesn't love a breakfast burrito! Breakfast burritos are great easy on the go breakfast. Make a bunch and keep them in the freezer.

Plus the eggs and turkey bacon provide a good amount of muscle sustaining protein and keep you fuller longer.

Ingredients

Egg

Small scoop of black beans

Handful of spinach

¼ avacodo chopped

Tortilla

Salsa optional

Anything else you might like

Instructions

Scramble 1 egg (or use egg whites), add in black beans, spinach and avocado.

Wrap in one small whole wheat tortilla, add in a little salsa for a little kick!

Shredded cheese also optional.



Recovery Snacks

Pumpkin Muffins

Supplied by Shawna Button

Ingredients

3/4 cup (175 ml) Brown Sugar
1/2 cup (125 ml) Melted Coconut oil
2 eggs
1 Tbsp. (15 ml) Vanilla extract
1 1/2 Cups (325 ml) Brown Rice Flour
1 Cup (250 ml) Rolled Oats
1/2 Cup (125 ml) Ground flax seed
2 tsp. (10 ml) Ground ginger
2-3 Tbsp ground cinnamon
1-1 1/2 tsp allspice
2 tsp. (10 ml) baking soda
1 tsp (5 ml) baking powder
2+ cups (500+ ml) pure pumpkin puree

Instructions

1. Pre-heat oven to 350 F (180 C)
2. Line a 12 cup muffin tin with paper muffin cups.
3. Measure out 1 Tbsp. (15 ml) brown sugar and set aside.
4. In a Large bowl beat together remaining brown sugar, oil, eggs, and vanilla
5. Add dry ingredients and beat until combined.
6. Add pumpkin puree and beat until very well combined.
7. Bake in centre of preheated oven for 25-30 minutes or until toothpick placed in centre of muffin comes out clean.

Makes 12 muffins.

Sweet and Spicy Roasted Chickpeas

Larissa Robinson loves snacking on these tasty treats. They are very filling and make great additions to salads, power bowls and stir fries.

Ingredients

1 can chickpeas
3 tbsp olive oil or coconut oil
1 tbsp sriracha sauce
1 tbsp honey
1 tbsp sesame seeds optional
1/2 cup whole almonds
Salt to taste

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 375F. Line a baking dish with tin foil. Dish should be large enough that chick peas can lay flat. You can use a cookie tray if you like.
2. In a bowl mix honey, sriracha and oil together, if using coconut oil heat it up so it is liquid. Add drained chickpeas and almonds then stir to coat with mixture.
3. Pour into baking dish, sprinkle over salt and roast for about 20 minutes.
4. Stir often and at about halfway through sprinkle on sesame seeds.
5. It is done when the chickpeas have turn slightly golden brown.
6. Let cool and enjoy.

Larissa makes lots of variations of this snack. Note that you might need a napkin to wipe your fingers if eating stand alone. Feel free to use just chickpeas and no almonds or just almonds. The combo creates a fun soft and crunchy texture. Other variations listed below

Maple chickpeas

Omit sriracha and sub maple syrup for the honey
Add some cinnamon and very small amount of cumin

Original Recipe

Use only oil and salt on the chickpeas

Tex Mex chickpeas

Use only oil on the chickpeas
Season with salt, chili powder, garlic salt, granulated onion and a touch of cayenne
Sesame seed not recommended as these are manly chickpeas and they look too fancy

Energy Bars – 3 choices

Tammy Farrell enjoys mixing up the flavour of her energy bars. Pick one today and try them all tomorrow!

Ingredients

Oatmeal Raisin

1 cup raisins
3/4 cup oatmeal (not quick oats)
3/4 cup Almonds or Cashews
1/2 tsp cinnamon
1/4 tsp vanilla extract
dash salt

Peanut Butter & Jelly

1 cup peanuts
1 cup dates
1 cup dried cherries

Peanut Butter & Chocolate

1 cup peanuts
1 cup dates
1 cup chocolate chips

Special Equipment

Food processor

Instructions

Regardless of the flavor you choose to make, here are the directions are the same: Combine all the ingredients in a food processor and pulse about 30-45 seconds (or more if necessary). The mixture should stick together well (pinch it with your fingers to test!).

1. For mess free bars, line a loaf pan with parchment paper or plastic wrap. Pour the processed bar mix into the pan, fold the other half of the wrap over the mix and press firmly into bars.
2. Place the bars in the fridge for about an hour and then cut into 6 bars/pieces.

These homemade larabars can be individually wrapped and stored in the freezer for fast-on-the-go snacking and they freeze well.

Bonus Tip:

If the fruit is really tough or extra chewy, it can be soaked in 1/3 cup of warm water for 10 minutes, then drained and processed according to the directions above.

Big Perry Balls

Melissa Perry enjoys these treats.

Ingredients

1 cup oatmeal
1/2 cup natural peanut butter or cashew or almond butter
1/2 cup ground flaxseed or 1/4 cup ground almonds
1/3 cup honey
1 tsp vanilla extract
Grated coconut for rolling

Instructions

Mix all ingredients in a large bowl. Form into small balls (about 1" diameter) using a spoon and place in a plate covered in parchment paper and a layer of grated coconut. Refrigerate slightly to compress all ingredients together.

Makes about 18 balls.

Cornmeal muffins

Chris Walsh is continuously asked by other TCoBers to bring these for our potlucks.

Ingredients

1 cup flour
1 tablespoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/3 cup sugar
1 cup yellow cornmeal
1/2 cup butter
1 egg
3/4 cup milk
1 cup grated sharp cheddar
1 finely diced jalapeno pepper (if you like it spicy, otherwise omit)

Instructions

1. Mix everything together except for cheese, when blended add cheese.
2. Put in greased muffin tin and bake 375 for 15-20 minutes.

Serve warm.

Pot Bread

Tanya loves this recipe because it is so simple and yet versatile, and of course with delicious results! I hope you have as much fun as I do making and creating homemade breads. The possibilities are endless and bread can be eaten any time with almost anything. Happy cooking and baking!

Ingredients

Basic Bread for Beginners

3 cups unbleached flour
1 teaspoons salt
1/2 teaspoon Instant or Rapid-rise yeast
1 1/2 cups water

Instructions

1. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together flour, salt and yeast.
2. Add water and mix until a shaggy mixture forms.
3. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and set aside for 12 - 18 hours. Overnight works great. Let the dough rest.
4. After the dough has rested. Heat oven to 450 F degrees. When the oven has reached 450 degrees place a cast iron pot with a lid in the oven and heat the pot for 30 minutes.
5. Meanwhile, scrape dough with a spatula onto a heavily floured surface and kneed it just enough so it isn't super sticky. Shape into a ball. Cover with the mixing bowl and let set while the pot is heating. Remove hot pot from the oven and drop in the dough. Cover and return to oven for 30 minutes. After 30 minutes remove the lid and bake an additional 15 minutes. Remove bread from oven and place on a cooling rack to cool.

Important note

Make this recipe EXACTLY as stated the first 1-2 times so that you have a good sense of what the shaggy mixture looks and feels like. Once you've "got it", you can begin to get creative and make other breads. You should add all ingredients together, except cheese, which should be added during the kneading time. More yeast and water are needed the grainier you make the bread. Be careful not to add too much yeast when "creating" or you will wreck the taste completely (you'll know as soon as you try your first bite... it has a distinct sour-like flavour), so err on the side of caution when in doubt (less than 2 tsp should be about the maximum you would ever need). And yes, you really do have to pre-heat the pot!

See next page for an advanced multigrain bread.

Multigrain bread for more advanced bakers

1 cup flour

1/3 c ground flax

2/3 c oatmeal

1 cup total of handfuls of: millet, chia seeds, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, ground bran

1 tsp salt

1 to 1 1/2 tsp yeast

2 + cups water (until I get the right shaggy consistency)

Other variations: poppy seed and onion (use dried onion or onion soup mx), cheddar and jalapeño, sundried tomato and olives, cheddar herb (use italian spices), cinnamon and raisin, maple and raisin (use maple syrup for a sweet treat), cranberry and ginger (chop into small bits dried ginger, from the bulk barn, and add a touch of cinnamon), and my very favourite is raisin, fig and walnut bread! Go nuts with the dried fruit as I never seem to add enough, same goes for when adding cheese.

Finishing touches for the fancy inclined baker are included on the next page.

Brush butter on top crust right after you remove the bread from the oven if you like a soft crust

or

Brush egg white on top of bread before baking for a smooth and shiny finish (great for egg bread and the sweeter breads)

or

Brush milk on top of bread and sprinkle with sugar before baking for a special occasion treat on the sweet breads like cinnamon raisin, cranberry ginger

Salads & Soups

Fig Balsamic Dressing

Larissa Robinson loves to get this ready on the weekend and then eat all week long. Make a whole lot and keep it in the fridge for up to 3 weeks.

Ingredients

Olive oil

Balsamic vinegar

Fig jam

Salt and pepper

Fig jam can be found at most Fortinos, but look by the fancy cheeses not in the jam aisle.

Special Equipment

Blender or magic bullet

Instructions

1. Measure out equal parts of olive oil, jam and vinegar pouring each into the blender/bullet
2. Add a generous amount of salt and pepper to taste
3. Blend
4. Pour over salad



Simple Salad

Ingredients

Mixed greens

3 carrots

1 purple beet

Fig dressing above

Special Equipment

Food processor or hand grater

Instructions

Part 1 – carrot/beet slaw

Ideally this part is done on the weekend or when you have time

1. Wash and peel the carrots and beet
2. Grate the carrots and beet; a food processor makes this easy and contains the purple beet mess well
3. Pour grated carrots and beet into a large bowl and mix with your hands
4. Keep covered in the fridge for about a week

Part 2 – salad to be made before consuming

1. In a large salad bowl toss in greens and fig dressing
2. Sprinkle in shredded mixture
3. Mix again just before serving

Optional add in for the salad: pine nuts, walnuts, goat cheese

Roasted Red Pepper Soup

Chris Walsh says this recipe is great when tomatoes are in season.

Serves 4 and takes about 60 minutes (or faster if you are hungry)

Ingredients

6 or so large tomatoes (can substitute roma, etc.)
3 red peppers
1 yellow onion
5-6 cloves of garlic
2-3 tablespoons of olive oil
vegetable broth (1 container-- 16 oz)
cream or milk (cup or so)
salt
pepper
handful of fresh basil
Goat cheese (optional)

Instructions

1. Cut tomatoes, peppers (seeded), onion (don't bother peeling) in ½ place on baking sheet, add cloves of garlic (don't bother peeling).
2. Drizzle with olive oil.
3. Bake in a 400 degree oven or on the Bbque until squishy and caramelized (40 minutes or so). Don't' worry if pepper skins blacken.
4. Allow to cool, remove skins from all of the vegetables.
5. Throw into a blender and blend until smooth.
6. Place the pureed vegetables in a pot with vegetable stock, season with salt and pepper and heat until blended (5-10 minutes)
7. Add cream and basil to finish cooking
8. Serve soup warm add a dollop of goat cheese or other soft cheese to each bowl.

Tanya's Everything Tasty Salad

Tanya likes to save time in her hectic days by prepping this salad the night before. She gets 2 servings to eat later and all the veggies have time to thaw by prepping in advance. She recommends good containers like Pyrex with sealing lids for easy transport.

Ingredients

2 cups kale, sliced into strips
2-3 radishes sliced
1 carrot, julienned
handful of cherry tomatoes
1/3 cup frozen corn
1/3 cup frozen edamame (I sometimes substitute cooked chickpeas)
1/2 cup cooked red quinoa
1/2 avocado cubed
1 pickled egg or hardboiled egg, cubed or sliced
handful of sliced sundried tomatoes
handful of dried cranberries or chopped dried apricots
handful of raw pumpkin seeds and/or slivered almonds
feta cheese cubed

Instructions

Layer first 3 ingredients like a lasagna, then just keep scattering the other ingredients on top.

Add balsamic vinegar and olive oil dressing just before eating

You won't be hungry an hour after eating this salad and it is so tasty while being full of nutrients. You can change up the dressing too by using poppy seed, carrot ginger, sundried tomato or whatever you fancy most. You can throw it in a pita or wrap with pesto or hummus spread and make it a sandwich. Tanya eats it for lunch or when I finish work really late at night but don't want a heavy meal before bed. It so versatile! Enjoy :)

Warm Quinoa and Bulgur Salad with Lemon

Margaret Dorio admits that this recipe is on the box of the PC quinoa and bulgur blend but we added by request. It is a staple at the Dorio Cottage and great as a meal or side dish.

Ingredients

1 package PC Blue Menu Bulgur & Quinoa Blend
1/3 cup fresh lemon juice
¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
½ tsp finely grated garlic
½ tsp honey
½ tsp kosher salt
¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper
½ cup thinly sliced green onion
1/3 cup chopped parsley (listed on the box but Margaret uses cilantro)

Margaret special adds:

Zest of half a lemon
1 cup edamame beans (frozen)
½ cup chopped celery for crunch

Instructions

1. In a sauce pan bring 2 ½ cups salted water to a boil. Once boiling add the quinoa blend. Reduce to low heat, cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Remove from heat and let stand covered for 5 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, whisk together lemon zest, lemon juice, oil, garlic, honey, salt and pepper. Add to hot bulgur. Stir in green onion, beans and parsley (cilantro). Beans will thaw bring salad from hot to warm.
3. Serve immediately or at room temperature.
4. Garnish with pecan halves or other nut of choice, if desired.

Load Me Up Dinner

Thai Chicken Stir Fry

Margaret Dorio makes this recipe for her family all the time. She says you can really have fun; use whatever veggies you happen to have in fridge, or make it with pork. Ingredients here are mostly suggestions.

Ingredients

Red thai curry paste – available in Fortinos in the Asian food section

Canned coconut paste – available in Fortinos in the Asian food section or baking aisle

Chicken breast

Olive oil

Fresh garlic

Ginger Root

Carrots

Leak

Red peppers

Purple cabbage

Broccoli

Snow peas

Cilantro

Spinach

Rice or rice noodles

Instructions

1. Brown some cubed chicken in a skillet with a bit of olive oil. Once browned and mostly cooked add half a small jar of red thai curry paste and set aside
2. Heat about 1/3 cup of olive oil in a wok and stir fry the veggies with garlic and ginger
3. Near the end of the veggies cooking (about 5 minutes), add some chopped cilantro and/or small baby spinach leaves.
4. Add the seasoned meat (with the thai paste) to the veggies, and then the coconut milk - one small can.
5. Toss all together and serve over some rice, or cook some rice noodles and add them to the veggies and meat.

Don't forget to cook your rice or noodles too

Squash Coconut Curry

Claudia and Paul Hutchinson enjoy this curry. If Claudia recommends it then it must be good!

Ingredients

6 cloves garlic
2 tablespoons minced ginger
2 teaspoons olive oil
1 teaspoon each curry powder and chili powder
½ teaspoon each turmeric and cayenne pepper
5-6 cups peeled, chopped squash (I used butternut)
1 15-ounce can thick coconut milk
3 tablespoons red curry paste
3 tablespoons creamy peanut butter
½ tablespoon honey
2 15-ounce cans fire roasted diced tomatoes (hard to find but worth it if you can)
1¼ cup light bulgur, uncooked (I've used quinoa too)
cilantro for topping

Instructions

1. Cook bulgur according to package directions. Set aside.
2. Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the garlic and ginger. Saute for 2-3 minutes, until soft and fragrant.
3. Sprinkle the dry seasonings (curry, chili, turmeric, cayenne) over the squash and toss to combine. Pour the coconut milk into the skillet and whisk the curry, peanut butter, and honey into the coconut milk until smooth. Add the seasoned squash and tomatoes. Cover and simmer for 10-15 minutes or until squash is tender but not mushy. Remove from heat and let stand for 10 minutes (the sauce will thicken).
4. Add the bulgur to the skillet and mix well, or serve the curry over individual servings of bulgur. Add chopped cilantro just before serving.
5. I hope you like it!

Peanut Butter Stir Fry

A delicious and filling vegan meal.

Ingredients

2-3 carrots
1/3 – 1/2 nappa Cabbage
1 onion
2-3 bell peppers (red, yellow or orange)
1 broccoli head
1/4 cup salted roasted peanuts roughly chopped
Sriracha sauce to taste
Oil of choice
2-4 garlic cloves
1/4 cup smooth peanut butter
2 tbsp honey
2 tbsp soy sauce
2 tbsp rice vinegar

Grain of choice: Whole grain rice, whole grain spaghetti noodles, quinoa, etc

Instructions

1. Start with cooking the grains as directed on package
2. Chop carrots and start to sauté over medium heat in oil
3. Next chop up broccoli and add to carrots
4. Next cut up onion and peppers, add to sauté
5. Dice garlic and add in last
6. Measure out peanut butter, honey, soy sauce and vinegar. Add right into sauté.
7. Stir fry mixture together and add sriracha or more soy sauce if needed
8. Serve over grain with a sprinkling of the salted peanuts

For the meatlovers, you can include chicken.

Spicy Coconut Sauce/Stir Fry/Soup

The base of this recipe is a staple at Larissa's house. By far the best thing to top cooked kale. The recipe is from "The plan" and is loaded with natural anti-inflammatories.

Ingredients

4 cloves garlic
2 tablespoons minced ginger
1 teaspoon each turmeric and paprika
½ teaspoon cayenne pepper or less if you don't like spice
½ teaspoon cumin
1 can coconut milk
½ an onion
2 teaspoon brown sugar

Instructions

1. Sauté the garlic, ginger and onion in your preferred oil until the onions go clear
2. Add the coconut milk, sugar and spices
3. Let simmer to reduce and thicken – about 10 minutes

For sauce

4. Blend and use like butter over your steamed veggies

For stir fry

5. Don't simmer the coconut milk to reduce and don't blend it
6. Pour over your favourite stir fried veggies then serve over your favourite grains
 - a. Suggested veggies: carrots, shitake mushrooms, broccoli, zucchini
 - b. Suggested protein: chick peas or chicken
 - c. Suggested grains: quinoa, brown rice, squash

For soup

1. Double the recipe for sauce
2. Add chopped carrots in with the garlic and onions
3. Don't simmer, add chopped broccoli, zucchini, shitake mushrooms, chick peas
4. Add water so liquid level comes up to just cover the veggies
5. Add in one can of puree squash (found in organic section of fortinos) or add cooked squash that you have mashed up. The squash thickens the soup.
6. Boil until veggies are cooked
7. Serve hot

Almond Crusted Chicken

Anna recommends this meal when you are pressed for time. Almond crusted chicken is quick and included are sides of potatoes and kale salad.

Ingredients

Chicken

1/2 cup whole almonds or ground almonds if no food processor
1/2 cup Dijon mustard
2 boneless skinless chicken breasts

Potatoes

1 bag of PC mini potatoes
1 package of onion soup mix
Lots of olive oil

Salad

1 head of kale
1/2 lemon
Handful of black olives
Handful of pine nuts

Instructions

Chicken

1. Preheat oven to 450F and line a cookie sheet with parchment paper
2. In a small food processor, add the almonds and chop fine
3. Lay a piece of parchment paper down and sprinkle almonds over it
4. Slice the chicken breast lengthwise
5. Cover the chicken in the mustard and then dredge over the almonds
6. Lay chicken down on the cookie sheet
7. Bake for 10-13 min

Potatoes

1. Wash and dry the potatoes
2. In a large microwave safe dish with a lid combine potatoes, oil and soup mix – mix well
3. Cook in microwave for 5 minutes and stir
4. Repeat 2 more 5 min intervals stirring between

Salad

1. Wash kale and remove stems
2. Place kale in a bowl and massage the leaves – Anna actually does this to soften it she says it is very important and should take at least 5 min
3. Squeeze the juice of the lemon over the kale, add olives and pine nut
4. Toss and serve

Red beet burger with avocado mango salsa

Kayla Bruce says this recipe is not hers but that she does love it.

Ingredients

Burgers

3 cups red beets, peeled, grated
1 ½ cups rolled oats
1 medium onion, finely diced
2 oz. goat cheese
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 tbsp olive oil
2 large eggs
1 tbsp fresh chopped basil
sea salt & fresh cracked black pepper

Avocado mango salsa:

½ cup avocado, diced
½ cup mango, diced
½ lime, juiced
½ tsp lime zest
½ tsp honey
¼ tsp sea salt
¼ tsp freshly cracked black pepper

Instructions

1. Squeeze excess moisture from the beets and combine in a large mixing bowl with oats, onion, cheese, olive oil and eggs.
2. Mix well and allow to sit for 30 minutes to 1 hour.
3. Preheat oven to 400F.
4. Divide mixture in half and make 3 burgers from each half to give you 6 patties.
5. On an oiled grill on medium heat, grill burgers for 3 minutes a side or pan sear in vegetable oil until golden brown on both sides, finish in oven for 7-10 min.
6. While burgers are in the oven, simply combine the ingredients for the salsa and its ready to go!

Black Bean Quinoa Burgers

Larissa Robinson makes these burgers and promises you won't miss the beef.

Ingredients

1 can black beans
1 cup cooked quinoa
6 mushrooms
¼ red onion finely chopped
1 tsp chili powder
1 tsp cumin optional
¼ cup chopped cilantro
1 egg
Salt to taste

Instructions

1. Drain the bean and pour out onto a cookie sheet
2. Bake in oven at 350F for 10-15 minutes until beans start to split
✓ Don't skip this part as it is critical to get a good texture
3. Mash beans with a fork or potato masher and let cool
4. Meanwhile dice the mushrooms and onion into very tiny pieces
5. Stir in the quinoa, spices and egg, mix well
6. Add beans and mix with your hands
7. Form into burger and bake on cookie sheet in the oven now at 375F
8. Turn over once after 10-12 minutes and bake for another 10-12 minutes
9. Serve on your favourite bun

Suggested toppings are Monterey Jack cheese, salsa and avocado slices

Slow Cooker Recipes

Paul Goodrow submitted these and added lots of his personality into the instructions. Read it for fun if you don't have a slow cooker just get his tips.

There are 4 variations around a "Central Theme".

- Mediterranean
- Italian (good as a pasta sauce)
- Old Fashion Stew
- Southwest/Chili

Central Theme

The Central Theme has

Meat - 1 package ground turkey, chicken or beef - or same quantity of chicken breast sliced and diced into bite sized pieces.

1 large, or 2 small **onions**, diced. Dice finely if you are making a pasta sauce.

1 bell **pepper**. I like red, especially for the Mediterranean, but green (or orange or yellow) will also work. Thinly sliced or diced (again, finely diced for the pasta sauce).

Spices. The suggested amount of spicing in these recipes is meant only as a guideline. Taste is extremely personal. So try the amounts suggested and then make the dish your own.

Garlic. The only rule about garlic is to use *enough*. Garlic is your friend and it keeps you safe from vampires. Fresh cloves are best. Garlic powder (never garlic salt) or minced from a jar are both ok, especially if you're lazy (lol). How much is *enough*? Yoda says there is no answer. So peel garlic buds 'til you get bored, or shake the powder jar until you wrist get tired, or just start with 2-3 tablespoons of minced from the jar.

Poultry spices – Poultry is boring by itself. To make it edible, you need some help, so start with 2 tablespoons of Club House **La Grille** (no salt added) **chicken seasoning**

2 teaspoons **poultry seasoning**

1 teaspoon **sage**

1 19 oz can of **crushed tomatoes** – if you want to use any of the "spiced" versions, go wild. You have the chef's permission.

Directions. In the slow cooker pot,

1. **Layer** the onions first (so the meat doesn't stick), then the meat, pepper, garlic and spices and crushed tomato.
2. **Choose** the **Variation** you want (**See below**) and **add** the Variation ingredients

3. **Turn on** slow cooker – low heat, for **5 hours**
4. Go for a **4 hour bike ride** (optional)
5. At the 4 hour mark,
 - a. **Add** any additional Variation ingredients, if any
 - b. **Stir** and thoroughly **mix** all ingredients in the pot
 - c. **Test** the spicing to see if you need to add more.
6. **Savour** the aroma
7. At 5 hours, **serve**. If anyone asks for salt, please strangle them. You have the perfect defense. “Officer, the recipe told me I had to.”

A. Mediterranean Variation

To the **Central Theme**, add

- 2-3 cups **mushrooms** chopped
- 1 tablespoon **coriander**
- 1 tablespoon **paprika**
- 2 tablespoon **“Cajun” spice** (from the bulk section of Fortino’s). This will add a little heat, so omit if desired.
- 2 tablespoons **basil**
- 1 tablespoon **tarragon**

At the 4 hour mark, add

- 1 cup (or 1 14 oz can, drained) sliced **black olives**
- 1 cup (or 1 14 oz can, drained) chopped **artichoke**
- additional **spices** from above, if needed, to taste

Serve with **couscous**. Follow the directions on the box, but instead of water, use a mixture of crushed tomato (3/4) and lemon juice (1/4), and/or any excess liquid from the cooker.

B. Italian Variation

To the **Central Theme**. Add

- 1 more 19 oz can **crushed tomatoes**
- 2 tablespoons **Italian seasoning**
- 3 tablespoons **basil**
- 1 tablespoon **tarragon**
- 1 tablespoon **ground pepper**
- 2 tablespoons **ground chilies** (optional)

Serve over favourite **pasta**

C. Old Fashion Stew Variation

To the **Central Theme**, Add

- 1 ½ to 2 cups **chicken or beef broth** as appropriate (Knorr or McCormicks work)
- 2 cups **mushrooms**, chopped
- 2 sweet **potatoes**, cubed
- 2 **potatoes**, cubed
- 2 **carrots**, sliced
- 2 **celery** stalks, chopped
- 2 cups **green beans**, trimmed and halved
- 2 tablespoons **basil**
- 1 teaspoon to 1 tablespoon **peppercorns**

D. Southwest/Chili Variation

Word of caution – Never, ever admit to a Texan that you used ground chicken or turkey in this recipe. You will be accused of being a liberal, hippy Yankee - or maybe just shot on the spot.

To the **Central Theme**, Add

- 1 more 19 oz can **crushed tomatoes**
- 1 19 oz can **mixed beans/Six Bean Medley**, drained and rinsed
- 1 19 oz can **lima beans**, drained and rinsed
- 1 ½ cups **hot salsa**
- 1 cup **mushrooms**, chopped
- 1 **celery stalk**, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons **Cajun spice** (see Mediterranean)
- 1 tablespoon **Italian seasoning**
- 2 tablespoons **basil**
- 2 tablespoons **cumin**
- 1 tablespoon **fennel seeds**
- 1-2 teaspoons **cayenne pepper** (Start with this amount. You can add more later, but you can't take any away)

Loaded Sweet Potatoes

Larissa Robinson tries to make lots of this so there will be left overs but that never happens

Ingredients

2 sweet potatoes

½ can of black beans or more if you really like them

½ cup frozen corn kernels

½ onion

½ bell pepper

½ to ¾ cup Green Mexican sauce (found in Fortinos near the Taco kits, it is spicy)

½ cup salsa

1 teaspoon chili powder

1 teaspoon cumin

Salt and pepper to taste

Optional

Sour cream

Monterey Jack Cheese

Instructions

1. Bake whole sweet potatoes with skin on at 350F. This step takes about an hour but you can do it the day before or use this recipe to jazz up leftover sweet potatoes.
2. Cut potatoes in half lengthwise. Scoop out potatoes leaving a shell behind.
3. Sauté onion and pepper in your favourite oil
4. Add salsa, sauce, spices and bean to pepper and onion mix well
5. In a bowl stir potatoes, beans, corn and mixture together
6. Scoop mixture back into potato shell load high
7. Bake in oven at 350 for 20 minutes
8. Add shredded cheese to tops and bake until cheese melts
9. Serve hot with sour cream

Variation

Don't make shells and serve mixture as a nacho dip. It is great with Tostitos' Black Bean chips.

Desserts

Butterscotch Brownies

Larissa Robinson says these brownies are even better than any chocolate competitors. They get a hard crust and soft delicious middle. Great as a bottom to a sundae.

Ingredients

- 1 ½ cups flour
- 1 ½ tsp baking powder
- ¾ tsp salt
- 1 ¾ cups packed dark brown sugar
- 1 cup chopped walnuts (Larissa doesn't use these or any nuts!!)
- ½ cup melted butter (Larissa says must be salted butter)
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla extract (Larissa uses real vanilla bean)

Instructions

1. Heat oven to 350F
2. Mix flour, baking powder and salt in a larger bowl
3. Add brown sugar, nuts (if you really want them), butter, eggs and vanilla. Stirring to combine not blend.
4. Transfer to a 9x9 baking dish lined with parchment paper. Larissa has used a greased dish but prefers the ease of taking out the squares from the parchment paper.
5. Cook until golden and firm, about 25 minutes
6. Remove from oven and let cool 45 minutes although Larissa has never managed to wait quite that long before eating.
7. Cut into squares.

Alternate shape is to cook the batter in jumbo silicon muffin tins. They look so cute and creates the best bottom for sundaes plus everyone gets bottom the chewy middle and candy crust.

Salted Caramel Sauce

Larissa Robinson makes this recipe and needs new jeans because of it. Its so delicious that it is recommended that you only make it when you have enough company over to share it.

Ingredients

1 cup (200g) granulated sugar
6 Tablespoons (90g) salted butter, cut up into 6 pieces¹
1/2 cup (120ml) heavy cream²
1 teaspoon salt
1 inch of vanilla bean

Instructions

Note that making salted caramel is not hard but perhaps a little dangerous. Prep out the ingredients and pre measure them so you can focus on the pot. Use a pot that is much bigger and deeper than the size of the ingredients. Also use a nice wooden spoon with a long handle for stirring. The boil up is aggressive.

1. Heat granulated sugar in a medium saucepan over medium heat, stirring constantly with a high heat resistant rubber spatula or wooden spoon.
2. Sugar will form clumps and eventually melt into a thick brown, amber-colored liquid as you continue to stir. Be careful not to burn.
3. Once sugar is completely melted, immediately add the butter. Be careful in this step because the caramel will bubble rapidly when the butter is added.
4. Stir the butter into the caramel until it is completely melted, about 2-3 minutes.
5. Very slowly, drizzle in 1/2 cup of heavy cream while stirring. Since the heavy cream is colder than the caramel, the mixture will rapidly bubble and/or splatter when added.
6. Allow the mixture to boil for 1 minute. It will rise in the pan as it boils.
7. Remove from heat and stir in 1 teaspoon of salt and the vanilla. Allow to cool down before using. Larissa throws in the shell of the vanilla bean as a garnish not to be eaten.
8. Keeps refrigerated for 2-3 weeks depending on how fresh the cream was but that won't be a problem.

Use this sauce in sundaes with the butterscotch brownies and good vanilla ice cream. Sprinkle on nuts and other toppings as desired. Pour sauce over cinnamon buns, French toast or apples.

Monkey Squares

Larissa Robinson makes too many desserts. Here is another recipe, these were a big hit after Spin the Lakes.

Ingredients

1-1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs
1/3 cup butter, melted
3/4 cup banana chip, broken in small pieces (Larissa chops her with a knife)
3/4 cup dark chocolate chips
3/4 cup salted roasted peanuts
3/4 cup peanut butter chips
1 1/2 cup coconut flakes unsweetened
1 can sweetened condensed milk

Instructions

1. In bowl, stir crumbs with butter until moistened; press into parchment paper-lined 9-inch square cake pan.
2. In a bowl toss banana chips, chocolate chips, peanuts and peanut butter chips and coconut; pour dry mixture over graham cracker crust. Level out solids.
3. Pour condensed milk over top. Do not mix.
4. Bake in 350°F oven until set in centre, about 30 minutes. Let cool in pan on rack for 30 minutes. Cover and refrigerate to cool completely, about 1 hour. Larissa says that it is important to let set so you get nice squares. Don't cheat and break in early.
5. *(Make-ahead: Wrap and refrigerate for up to 5 days or overwrap in foil and freeze for up to 1 month.)*
6. Cut into squares.

Skor Bars

Kara Brianna makes these and says they are always a hit. It doesn't hurt that they are also easy.

Ingredients

1 ½ cups brown sugar
1 ½ cups butter
Saltine crackers
1 bag of semi-sweet chocolate chips

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350F
2. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper
3. Layer saltine crackers to cover cookie sheet
4. Melt butter in microwave or in a pan
5. Stir in brown sugar and heat until mixture bubbles
6. Pour mixture over crackers
7. Bake for 8 minutes
8. Pour chocolate chips over mixture and continue baking for 2-3 minutes
9. Remove from oven and spread the melted chips to evenly coat
10. Let cool and cut into pieces to serve