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Pasta Sauces—Light Yet Creamy

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## Make Vegetables the Star

Sautés, Stir-Fries, Salads, and More

Spring Vegetables  
with Garlic Dill  
Sauce, p. 25

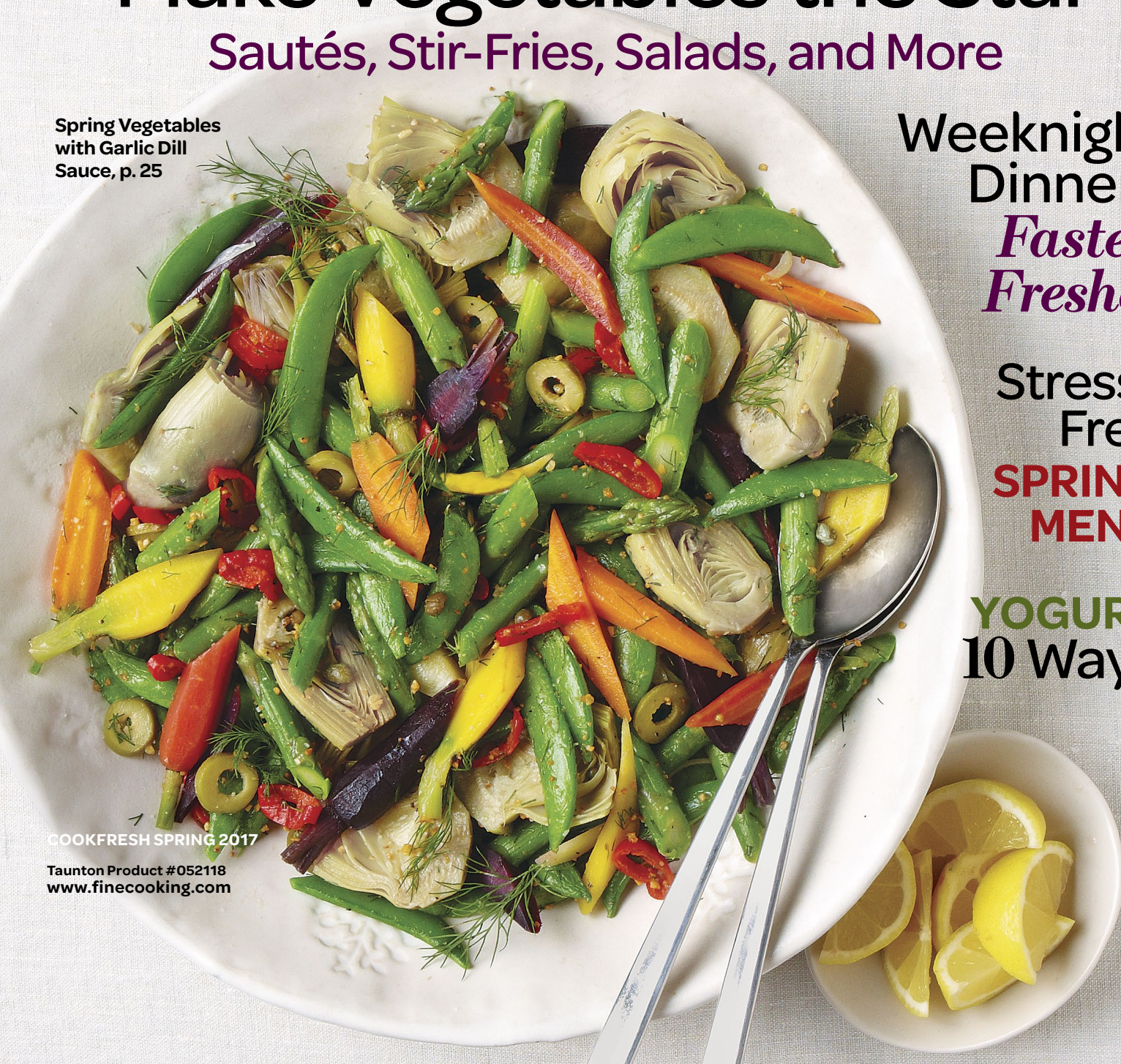
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Stress-  
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**SPRING  
MENU**

**YOGURT**  
10 Ways

COOKFRESH SPRING 2017

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Bag

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#### RECIPE

#### Juicy Roasted Chicken Thighs in a Bag

Serves 4-6

##### Ingredients

- 1 tbsp Maille Dijon Originale Mustard
- 3 tbsp dry white wine
- 1 lemon, zested and juiced
- 3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 1 tsp fresh thyme
- 1lb fingerling potatoes, halved
- 1 leek, trimmed and sliced in ½ inch pieces
- 2 shallots, thinly sliced
- 1 lemon, thinly sliced
- 8 chicken thighs, skin on
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- ¼ tsp sea salt
- ¼ tsp freshly cracked black pepper
- 3 tbsp butter

##### Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.
2. In a small bowl, mix together Maille Dijon Originale Mustard, white wine, lemon juice and zest, garlic, and thyme, then set aside.
3. Place potatoes, leeks, and shallots in an If You Care Medium Non Stick Parchment Roasting Bag, seam side up on a rimmed baking sheet or roasting pan. Then season the chicken with the garlic powder, salt and pepper and place inside the bag on top of the vegetables. Place the lemon slices in the bag and pour mustard mixture on top of the chicken and vegetables and fold the open end of the bag tightly towards the top as many times as possible to seal.
4. Roast in the oven for 35 minutes, then remove and open the bag by either ripping or cutting with scissors to expose the top of the chicken. Baste chicken with butter, then place back in oven to roast for another 15 to 20 minutes, or until desired brownness, then serve and enjoy!

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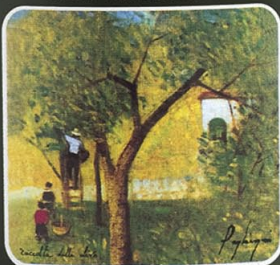


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## Hello, Spring

SPRING HAS ARRIVED! The warmer weather and longer days mean that local fresh produce is popping up at the market: tender peas, sweet strawberries, meaty asparagus, and more. Need help turning all of those fruits and vegetables into delicious, nutritious dishes? Look no further. This special issue of *Fine Cooking* is packed with fantastic spring recipes for breakfast (try the Poached Egg and Asparagus Toasts with Lemon-Chive Beurre Blanc, p. 51), dessert (indulge in tart Rhubarb Brown Sugar Crumble, p. 65), and everything in between. To make healthier eating even easier, we've provided icons to help you identify which recipes fit your eating and cooking style, from quick to vegetarian to make-ahead (see below). Now you have the tools you'll need to cook with what's fresh and delicious this season.

—The *Fine Cooking* Editors

### A guide to making healthy choices

These icons are located throughout this issue of *CookFresh* to help you choose recipes that match your needs.



**QUICK:** Under 30 minutes.



**HEALTHY:** Calories are 550 or fewer; saturated fat is 5 grams or fewer; cholesterol is 300 mg or fewer.



**VEGETARIAN:** May contain eggs and dairy ingredients.



**WHEAT-FREE:** Contains no wheat or wheat products. Please note, icon does not indicate gluten-free.



**MAKE AHEAD:** Can be completely prepared ahead (may need reheating and a garnish to serve).

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## On the Web

Make **FineCooking.com** your destination for healthy and nourishing spring recipes, how-tos, videos, and more.



### Fresh Spinach, Ready in 10

Baby spinach is the workhorse of weeknight dinners: It's healthful, it's mild enough to please finicky eaters, it requires little to no prep, and it cooks quickly. The only downside is that it's easy to get stuck in a rut and just keep making the same old salad. These 10-minute recipes will help you jazz things up: **FineCooking.com/spinach-in-10**.



### DIY Yogurt

Inspired to try one (or all) of the ideas for cooking with yogurt on pp. 52–61? The best blank canvas is plain, homemade yogurt: You can control the flavor, tartness, thickness, and what goes into it (and what doesn't). Plus, it's much less expensive than store-bought. Find our simple, mostly hands-off tutorial at **FineCooking.com/yogurt**.



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# MAKE IT TONIGHT

*Fast and fresh meals, any night of the week.*

## grilled flap steak and asparagus with béarnaise butter

A compound butter packed with tarragon and shallot mimics the flavors of béarnaise sauce with much less effort. If you have any left over, try it on salmon or rice. **Serves 4**

- 2 large sprigs fresh tarragon
- 2 oz. (4 Tbs.) unsalted butter, softened
- 2 Tbs. minced shallot
- 1 Tbs. dry white wine or vermouth
- 1 Tbs. white-wine vinegar
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1½ lb. beef flap meat, cut into pieces of even thickness, if necessary
- 1 bunch asparagus, preferably thick, trimmed
- 1 Tbs. olive oil

Strip the tarragon leaves from the stems, finely chop the leaves to yield about 2 tsp., and set aside.

In an 8-inch skillet, melt 1 Tbs. of the butter over medium-low heat. Add the shallot and tarragon stems, and cook, stirring frequently, until the shallot is translucent, about 2 minutes. Add the wine, vinegar, and 1 Tbs. water, increase the heat to medium, and cook until the liquid is mostly evaporated, about 3 minutes. Transfer to a small bowl, remove and discard the tarragon stems, and let cool completely. Add the remaining 3 Tbs. butter, the chopped tarragon, ¼ tsp. salt, and ¼ tsp. pepper, and mix with a fork until well combined. Set aside until ready to use. (The butter may be made up to 1 week ahead; refrigerate and return to room temperature before using.)

Prepare a medium-high (400°F to 475°F) gas or charcoal grill fire. Put the meat and asparagus on separate sides of a large rimmed baking sheet (or similar). Coat with the olive oil, and season generously with salt and pepper. Grill the meat, turning every 2 minutes, until cooked to your liking, 6 to 8 minutes for medium (140°F). Transfer to a cutting board, cover loosely with foil, and let rest. Meanwhile, grill the asparagus, turning after 1 minute, until charred and tender, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer to a serving platter. Thinly slice the meat against the grain, arrange on the platter with the asparagus, top both with dollops of the butter, and serve.







## pasta with peas, arugula, and prosciutto

Use a sharp vegetable peeler for the Parmigiano shavings.

Serves 4 to 6

- 1 lb. dried pasta, such as orecchiette or penne
- 1 lb. arugula (about 4 small bunches)
- 6 Tbs. unsalted butter
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 lb. fresh English peas, shelled (pods discarded or saved for vegetable stock; see Test Kitchen, p. 86) or 1 cup frozen peas, thawed
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 3 Tbs. olive oil
- 10 thin slices prosciutto, diced (6 to 7 oz.)
- 2 Tbs. fresh lemon juice
- ¼ cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano; plus ¾ cup shavings for garnish
- 2 Tbs. chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

Put a pot of water on to boil. Salt it well and boil the pasta following the package directions.

Meanwhile, trim, wash, and thoroughly dry the arugula; chop it coarsely and set aside. In a large saucepan over medium heat, melt 4 Tbs. of the butter. Add the garlic and sauté until barely golden, about 2 minutes. Add the peas and sauté until tender-crisp,

another 3 to 4 minutes if using fresh or 1 minute if using thawed frozen. Season lightly with salt and pepper. With a slotted spoon, remove the peas and garlic from the pan and set aside. Leave as much liquid in the pan as possible and add the olive oil to the pan. Add the prosciutto and cook until very lightly browned, about 5 minutes. Add the arugula in batches, stirring and adding handfuls as it wilts. Add the lemon juice. Cook for only a few minutes, just until all the greens have wilted.

When the pasta is done, reserve 1 cup of the cooking water and drain the pasta. In a large bowl, toss the pasta with the peas, prosciutto, arugula, and grated Parmigiano, along with ½ cup of the reserved cooking water. Season with more ground pepper; toss. Taste and adjust the seasonings if needed. If the pasta seems dry, toss with more of the reserved cooking water. To serve, garnish each portion with the parsley and the Parmigiano shavings.



## deviled pork chops

Flavorful sauces, sugar, and spice make a bold and delicious coating for pork chops. **Serves 4**

- ¼ cup Dijon mustard
- 1 Tbs. firmly packed dark brown sugar
- 2 tsp. fresh lemon juice
- 2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- ¼ tsp. ground cayenne
- 4 1-inch-thick, bone-in, center-cut loin pork chops (2½ to 3 lb.)
- Kosher salt
- 1 Tbs. coarsely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley (optional)

Stir together the mustard, brown sugar, lemon juice, Worcestershire, and cayenne in a small bowl.

Position an oven rack 3 to 4 inches from the broiler element and heat the broiler to high. Line the bottom of a broiler pan with foil and replace the perforated top part of the pan. Arrange the pork on the broiler pan and season generously on both sides with salt. Brush about half of the mustard mixture over the top of the chops. Broil until the chops are deeply browned in spots, 6 to 8 minutes. Turn the chops over with tongs, brush with the remaining mustard mixture, and continue to broil until the pork is browned and just cooked through (an instant-read thermometer in the center of a chop should register 145°F), about 5 minutes more. Let rest a few minutes before serving. Sprinkle the better-looking sides of the chops with the parsley, if using, and transfer to serving plates.







## tuna, escarole, and chickpea salad with warm herb-garlic vinaigrette

*Good-quality tuna is a fabulous secret weapon for easy but satisfying meals. Its silky texture and slightly briny flavor make this salad feel substantial. Serves 4*

- 2 6.7-oz. jars good-quality tuna in oil (see Test Kitchen, p. 90)
- Extra-virgin olive oil, as needed
- 2 Tbs. minced shallot
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 Tbs. fresh lemon juice
- 2 Tbs. chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 1 tsp. finely chopped fresh rosemary
- Pinch of crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 medium head (about 1 lb.) escarole, trimmed, cleaned, and cut into bite-size pieces
- 1 15-oz. can chickpeas, drained and rinsed

$\frac{1}{2}$  small red onion, very thinly sliced lengthwise

Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper

- 1 oz. Parmigiano-Reggiano, shaved with a vegetable peeler (a heaping  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup)

Strain the oil from the tuna into a 1 cup measure. Add oil, if necessary, for a total of  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup. In a medium bowl, flake the tuna into large pieces and set aside.

In a 1-quart saucepan, heat the oil and shallot over medium heat and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, about

3 minutes. Add the garlic and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute. Remove from the heat, and whisk in the lemon juice, parsley, rosemary, and pepper flakes.

In a large bowl, toss the escarole, chickpeas, and onion with enough of the warm vinaigrette to coat the greens well. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Divide the salad among 4 dinner plates and top each with a quarter of the tuna. Drizzle the remaining dressing over the tuna, top with the cheese, and serve.





## chicken, shiitake, and watercress stir-fry

*This stir-fry gets deep complexity from Chinese fermented chile-bean sauce, also called toban djan, which can be found in the Asian section of well-stocked supermarkets. The dish comes together in a snap and is great with rice. Serves 2 to 4*

- 1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into ¾-inch pieces
- 1 Tbs. reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 1 tsp. sake or Shaoxing
- 2 tsp. cornstarch
- Kosher salt
- 2 Tbs. canola or other neutral oil
- 1½ Tbs. Chinese chile-bean sauce; more to taste
- 2 tsp. minced fresh ginger
- 6 oz. shiitake mushrooms, stemmed and sliced (about 2½ cups)
- ¼ cup lower-salt chicken broth
- 1 medium bunch watercress (6 oz.), stemmed
- 1 Tbs. rice vinegar

Put the chicken in a medium bowl and toss with 2 tsp. of the soy sauce, the sake, cornstarch, and ¼ tsp. salt. Heat a wok or a 12-inch skillet over high heat. Add 1 Tbs. of the oil and the chicken to the pan in a single layer. Leave the chicken undisturbed for about a minute before stirring, and then cook, stirring occasionally, until browned and partially cooked, about 4 minutes. Transfer the chicken to a bowl.

Return the pan to high heat. Add the remaining 1 Tbs. oil, the chile-bean sauce, and ginger to the pan, and stir to combine. Add the mushrooms, and cook, stirring frequently, until tender, about 2 minutes. Return the

chicken and any accumulated juices to the pan. Stir in the broth and the remaining 1 tsp. soy sauce. Cook, stirring frequently, until the chicken is cooked through, about 2 minutes.

Remove the pan from the heat and stir in the watercress, vinegar, and more chile-bean sauce to taste. Toss until the watercress wilts. Serve hot.







## almond-crusted halibut

*The crunchy earthiness of the halibut's nut coating is balanced by a crisp green salad and a drizzle of tangy lemon-tarragon vinaigrette. Since fish cooks so quickly, this dish is speedy by nature, but you can save even more time by chopping the almonds in a food processor and making the vinaigrette while the halibut cooks. Serves 4*

- 4½ oz. (1 cup) all-purpose flour**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 2 large eggs**
- 1½ cups toasted slivered almonds, finely chopped**
- 2 tsp. finely grated lemon zest**
- 1 1- to 1½-lb. skinless halibut fillet (preferably 1 inch thick), cut into 4 pieces and patted dry**
- ½ cup plus 2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil**
- 5 oz. (8 cups) mixed salad greens**
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice (from 1 large lemon)**
- 1 medium shallot, minced**
- 1 Tbs. chopped fresh tarragon leaves**

Line up three medium bowls on the counter. Whisk the flour, 2 tsp. salt, and 1 tsp. pepper in the first; lightly beat the eggs in the second; and mix the almonds, lemon zest,

and ½ tsp. salt in the third. Lightly season both sides of the fish with salt and pepper. Dredge each piece in the flour, then the egg, and then the almond mixture, pressing the nuts onto the fish so they adhere.

Heat 2 Tbs. of the oil in a 12-inch skillet over medium heat. Add the fish and cook, flipping once, until browned on both sides and flaky throughout (cut into a piece to check), about 4 minutes per side.

Meanwhile, put the greens in a large bowl. In a small bowl, whisk the lemon juice, shallot, tarragon, ½ tsp. salt, and ¼ tsp. pepper. Gradually whisk in the remaining ½ cup olive oil. Toss the greens with enough of the vinaigrette to lightly coat. Season to taste with salt.

Divide the greens among 4 plates and top with one of the halibut fillets. Drizzle some of the remaining vinaigrette over each and serve.





# Mushrooms

Make your own tasty, meaty jarred mushrooms.

BEFORE SPRING HAS REALLY SPRUNG, it can feel like there isn't much in season. That's why we love mushrooms. From cremini and shiitake to portobellos and hens of the woods, cultivated mushrooms are often one of the few items in stores that haven't been flown in from across the globe. So buy a bunch and enjoy them for weeks to come by preserving them in olive oil.

These mushrooms get lots of flavor from a quick sear, although they keep a nice, chewy texture because they're not cooked all the way through. The wine-and-vinegar marinade infuses them with even more flavor and provides an acidic balance to the rich olive oil. Tastier than your average store-bought jarred mushrooms, these are delicious on crostini, over steak, pork, or chicken, and as a pita topping or omelet filling.

## twice-marinated mushrooms

*This recipe works well with a variety of mushrooms. The cooking time, however, varies slightly depending on the type you use (see sidebar below). You can marinate each mushroom variety separately, or if you want to marinate a mix of mushrooms, cook them separately and then marinate them together. Yields about 2 cups*

- 1½ cups dry white wine
- ½ cup white-wine vinegar
- 3 medium cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 1x4-inch strips lemon zest, white pith removed
- 1 4-inch sprig rosemary
- 2 tsp. kosher salt
- ½ tsp. juniper berries (about 14), lightly crushed
- ½ tsp. fennel seed, lightly chopped
- ¼ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
- ¼ tsp. coarsely ground black pepper
- ¾ cup extra-virgin olive oil (approximately)
- 1 lb. mushrooms, trimmed (see below)

Mix the wine, vinegar, garlic, lemon zest, rosemary, salt, juniper berries, fennel seed, red pepper flakes, and black pepper to make a marinade.

Heat 3 Tbs. of the olive oil in a 12-inch skillet over medium-high heat until very hot. Add the mushrooms and cook, stirring once or twice, until golden brown on one or two sides, 1½ to 4 minutes, depending on the type of mushroom—they should not be cooked all the way through. Spread on a plate to cool.

Add the marinade to the skillet. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat, and simmer for 5 minutes to infuse the flavors. Put the mushrooms and marinade in a heatproof container, such as a 1-quart Pyrex measuring cup. Let cool to room temperature, cover, and refrigerate overnight.

Drain the mushrooms, reserving the garlic and discarding the marinade and most of the aromatics (it's OK if some of the aromatics stick to the mushrooms). Pack the mushrooms and garlic in a pint jar with lid (or other sealable container). Add enough of the remaining oil to cover, and refrigerate at least overnight and up to 1 month.



### Mushroom prep

Each type of mushroom requires slightly different trimming. Here's how to prepare a handful of favorites:

**Cremini** Halve if large; cook 2 to 3 minutes.

**Portobello** Remove stem and gills and cut into ½-inch-thick slices; cook 1½ to 2 minutes.

**Shiitake** Remove stems and leave whole; cook 1½ to 2 minutes.

**Oyster** If large, separate lobes from bunches; if small, leave in little bunches ½ to ¾ inch thick; cook 1½ to 2 minutes.

**Maitake/Hen of the woods** Separate into little bunches with ½- to ¾-inch-thick stems; cook about 2 minutes.

**Trumpet royale** Leave whole or in little clumps if small; cut lengthwise into halves or thirds if large. The stems should be ½ to ¾ inch thick. Cook about 4 minutes.





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# Grapefruit

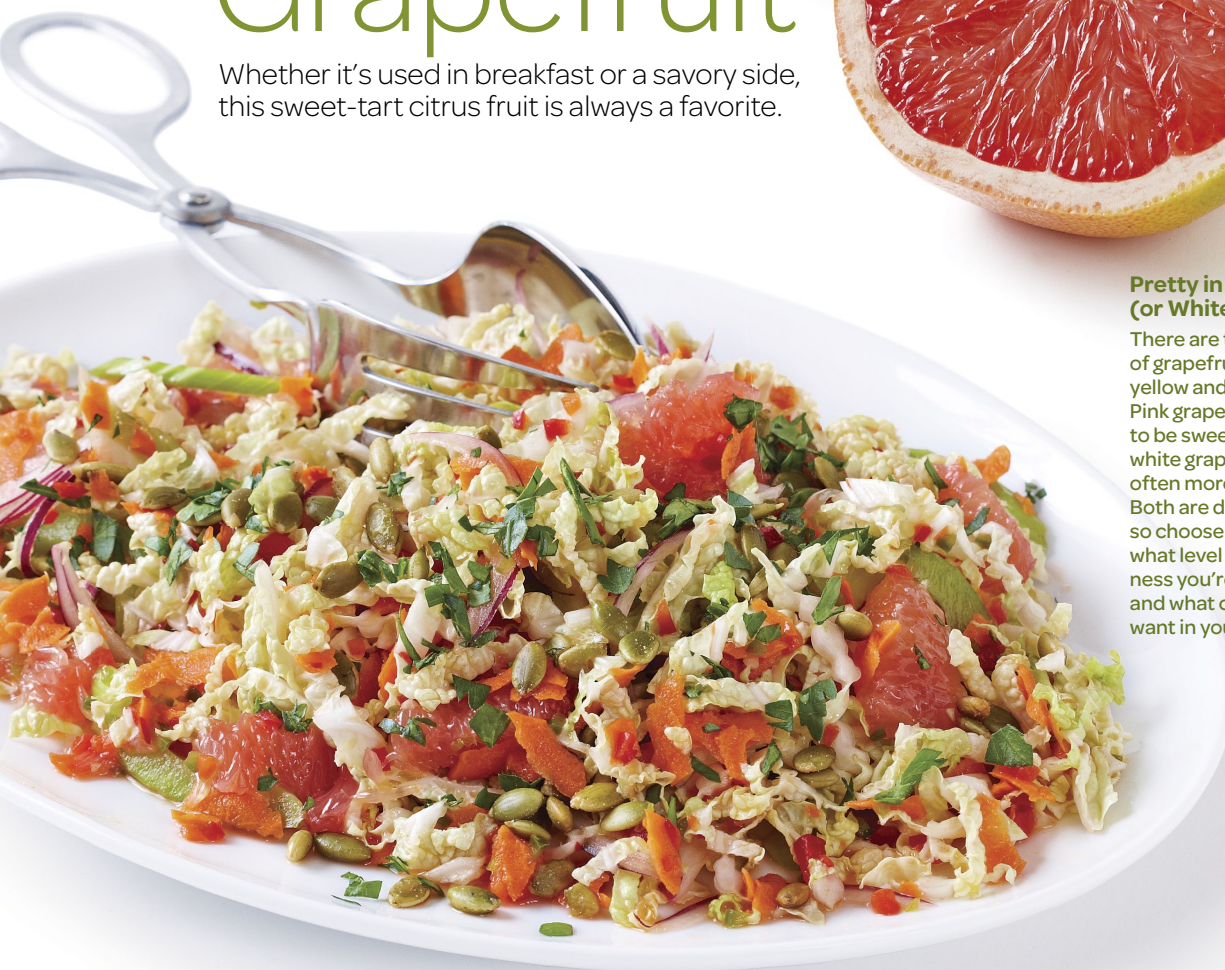
Whether it's used in breakfast or a savory side, this sweet-tart citrus fruit is always a favorite.

## Juicy Fruit

When you're shopping for grapefruit, look for those that feel heavy for their size. The extra weight is all juice. They should also have smooth, shiny skin, with no blemishes. Store grapefruit at room temperature for up to a week, or refrigerate them for up to 3 weeks.

## Pretty in Pink (or White)

There are two types of grapefruit: white/yellow and pink/red. Pink grapefruit tend to be sweeter, while white grapefruit are often more flavorful. Both are delicious, so choose based on what level of sweetness you're after—and what color you want in your dish.



## grapefruit slaw

*This tangy slaw packs a bit of heat from jalapeño and red pepper flakes. Pepitas sprinkled on top add a salty crunch. Try serving it with grilled seafood. Serves 4*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| ¼ cup thinly sliced red onion                                      | ½ tsp. finely grated lime zest                              |
| 3 cups thinly sliced napa cabbage                                  | ½ small jalapeño, seeded and finely chopped (about 1½ tsp.) |
| 2 pink grapefruit, peeled and segmented with 1 Tbs. juice reserved | ½ tsp. granulated sugar                                     |
| 1 medium celery rib, thinly sliced on a diagonal (about ½ cup)     | Pinch of crushed red pepper flakes                          |
| ¼ cup coarsely grated carrot                                       | 2 Tbs. roasted, salted pepitas                              |
| ¼ cup finely diced red bell pepper                                 | 1 Tbs. coarsely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley             |
| 2 Tbs. grapeseed oil   | Kosher salt   |
| 1½ Tbs. seasoned rice vinegar                                      |   |
| 1½ tsp. fresh lime juice   |   |

In a medium bowl, soak the onion in just enough water to cover for 10 minutes. Drain

and transfer to a large bowl. Add the cabbage, grapefruit, celery, carrot, and red pepper.

In the medium bowl, whisk together the grapefruit juice, oil, vinegar, lime juice and zest, jalapeño, sugar, and pepper flakes.

Toss the slaw with the dressing. Sprinkle with the pepitas and parsley. Season to taste with salt, and serve immediately.





## grilled grapefruit halves with honey, brown sugar, and pistachios

*These honeyed grapefruit halves have brunch written all over them. Grilling caramelizes the sugar in the fruit, accentuating its sweetness, while pistachios add warm, toasty flavors, and mint and crème fraîche lend bright, refreshing notes. Serves 4*

- ¼ cup honey, preferably orange blossom**
- 2 Tbs. orange liqueur, preferably Grand Marnier**
- 2 pink grapefruit, cut in half crosswise and scored between segments and around the edges**
- 2 Tbs. packed dark brown sugar**
- ¼ cup salted pistachios, coarsely chopped and toasted**
- ½ cup crème fraîche**
- 3 Tbs. thinly sliced fresh mint leaves**

Combine the honey and orange liqueur in a small bowl. Brush half of the mixture evenly over the cut side of the grapefruit halves.

Heat a cast-iron grill pan on high heat until water instantly evaporates when sprinkled on the pan. Carefully place the grapefruit halves, cut side down, in the pan and cook until grill marks form, about 4 minutes.

Transfer the grapefruit halves to serving plates, drizzle with the remaining honey mixture, and sprinkle with the dark brown sugar and pistachios. Garnish with dollops of crème fraîche and the fresh mint leaves, and serve.



## grapefruit curd

*This sunny curd is the perfect consistency to pour over ice cream or spread on toast.*

**Makes 1½ cups**

- 4 oz. (8 Tbs.) unsalted butter, cut into 8 pieces**
- ¾ cup granulated sugar**
- ½ cup fresh pink grapefruit juice**
- 3 Tbs. lightly packed finely grated grapefruit zest**
- Kosher salt**
- Pinch of ground cardamom (optional)**
- 8 large egg yolks**

Melt the butter in a 3-quart saucepan over medium heat. Remove the pan from the heat and whisk in the sugar, grapefruit juice, zest, a pinch of salt, and a pinch of ground cardamom, if using. Whisk in the yolks until smooth. Return the pan to medium-low heat and cook, whisking constantly, until the mixture thickens and coats the back of a wooden spoon, 5 to 6 minutes. Do not boil. Strain through a fine-mesh sieve into a bowl, using the wooden spoon to force it through. Let cool to room temperature, stirring occasionally.

Cover with plastic wrap directly touching the surface. Refrigerate until ready to use, up to 2 weeks.





# Caesar Salad

A classic salad every cook should know how to prepare.

WE DON'T KNOW EXACTLY WHO INVENTED THIS ICONIC SALAD of crisp romaine lettuce and garlicky croutons, with its tangy, creamy dressing. Some say it was Giacomo Junia, an Italian chef working in Chicago, who named it in honor of Julius Caesar. Others credit Tijuana chef and restaurateur Caesar Cardini, who allegedly found himself short on salad ingredients late one night in 1924 and improvised with items he had on hand.

Whatever its true origins, we're just happy we don't have to go to a restaurant to satisfy our craving for the crunchy, cheesy goodness of a classic Caesar. Making one at home is as simple as shopping for the best ingredients (including top-quality Parmigiano-Reggiano) and using them to make your own salad, croutons, and dressing. The homemade versions are worlds better than the store-bought—and the secret to Caesar success.

## Caesar Salad Basics



1

**Tossing cubed white bread with melted garlic butter before toasting makes for additive croutons.**

**Start with the right lettuce** Crunchy romaine is a must for this salad. Buy a whole head (not bagged hearts) so it's at its freshest, and wash to remove any grit. Dry the leaves thoroughly in a salad spinner or with a kitchen towel so the dressing adheres well.

**Make your own croutons** The best croutons come from white sandwich bread **1**. After baking, they're crunchy on the outside and still a bit chewy inside. Plus, homemade croutons don't have the preservatives of most store-bought croutons.



2

**Coarsely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano gives the Caesar dressing and the salad great texture and flavor.**

**Use the best cheese** High-quality Parmigiano-Reggiano makes all the difference here. It's used in the salad and in the dressing. Buy a chunk and grate it yourself in a food processor **2** or use the small round holes on a box grater for a coarse, sandy texture.

**Don't skip the anchovies** They give the dressing that classic Caesar flavor, with no hint of fishiness.



### Tool Kit

Check to make sure you have these kitchen essentials before making Caesar salad:

- Sharp chef's knife
- Large rimmed baking sheet
- Small (2-quart) saucepan
- Large liquid measuring cup
- Wooden spoon
- Blender
- Small food processor or box grater
- Large salad bowl
- Tongs or salad servers





## classic caesar salad

Leftover dressing is great on pasta or potato salad, or brushed on grilled chicken or fish. **Serves 4 to 6**

### FOR THE DRESSING

- ¼ cup canola oil**
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- 6 oil-packed anchovies**
- 4 large cloves garlic, smashed and peeled**
- 1 large egg yolk**
- 2 Tbs. fresh lemon juice**
- 2 tsp. Dijon mustard**
- 1 tsp. finely grated lemon zest**
- ½ tsp. Worcestershire sauce**
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt**
- ¼ tsp. freshly ground black pepper**
- 1 oz. Parmigiano-Reggiano, finely grated (½ cup)**

### FOR THE SALAD

- 2¾ oz. Parmigiano-Reggiano**
- 1 large head romaine lettuce (about 1 lb., 6 oz.), trimmed, quartered lengthwise, then cut crosswise into 1- to 1½-inch strips (12 to 13 cups), washed and dried**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 1 recipe Garlic-Butter Croutons (at right)**

### MAKE THE DRESSING

In a liquid measuring cup, combine the canola and olive oils. Put the remaining dressing ingredients except the Parmigiano in a blender and blend until thoroughly combined. With the motor running on medium high, carefully pour in the oils in a slow, steady stream. The dressing will emulsify as soon as all of the oil is incorporated. Stop the motor, add the Parmigiano, and quickly blend to combine. (You can store the dressing, tightly covered, in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.)

### MAKE THE SALAD

Cut the Parmigiano into small cubes and pulse it in a small food processor until coarsely grated to the consistency of large pieces of sand (not too fine). Alternatively, grate the cheese on the small round holes of a box grater.

Put the lettuce in a large salad bowl. Drizzle a scant ⅓ cup of the dressing over the lettuce and toss well. Taste and add more dressing if necessary, a teaspoon or so at a time, until the leaves are nicely dressed. Add ¼ cup of the Parmigiano and toss well. Taste a leaf and add more cheese if you like or pass more at the table. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Add the croutons, toss well, and serve.

## garlic-butter croutons

**Yields about 4 cups**

- 4 large slices white sandwich bread, cut into ¾- to 1-inch pieces (about 4 cups)**
- 3 oz. (6 Tbs.) unsalted butter**
- 2 large cloves garlic, smashed and peeled**
- Kosher salt**

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 350°F.

Put the bread cubes on a large rimmed baking sheet. Melt the butter in a 1- to 2-quart saucepan over medium-low heat. Add the garlic, mashing it gently with the back of a wooden spoon, and raise the heat to medium. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the butter is fragrant (the garlic may start to brown around the edges), 3 to 4 minutes. Remove from the heat and discard the garlic. Drizzle the butter over the bread cubes. Toss with your hands until the cubes are evenly coated. (Don't worry if some crumble.) Spread them in a single layer and sprinkle with ¾ tsp. salt. Bake until the croutons are a deep golden brown, 15 to 17 minutes. Let cool completely. (You can store the croutons in an airtight container for up to 2 days or freeze for up to 3 weeks.)

**Note:** This recipe contains a raw egg. If that's a concern, use a pasteurized egg.







# SEASONAL HERBS

Cook with spring's fragrant bounty in suppers, snacks, and more.

A FRESH BUNCH OF DELICATE MINT, mild chives, or licoricey tarragon provides the perfect cook's inspiration. Here, you'll learn about six favorite spring herbs, including how to cook with and pair them.

A few tips before you start: When shopping, look for herbs that are crisp and aromatic,

and avoid those that are wilted or yellowing. Give them a sniff—there should be no moldy odor. Store wrapped loosely in a damp paper towel in a container with a tight-fitting lid. Most fresh herbs will last up to a week, so use them as soon as you can to keep them bright, fresh, and fragrant.





## COVER RECIPE

### spring vegetables with garlic dill sauce

*Tender spring vegetables are beautifully finished with a bright, flavorful herb sauce in this side dish. Serves 2 as a main course, 4 as a side*

- 2 lbs. baby artichokes, outer leaves removed, sliced in half and put in a lemon water bath**
- 8 oz. baby carrots, sliced in half lengthwise, then sliced in half on the diagonal**
- 8 oz. snap peas, trimmed**
- 1 lb. medium asparagus, cut into 2-inch pieces on the diagonal, about 8 oz.**
- 2 Tbs. unsalted butter**
- 2 Tbs. olive oil**
- 1½ Tbs. finely chopped garlic**
- 1½ Tbs. chopped fresh dill; more for garnish**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- ½ cup peppadew peppers, sliced into thin rings, about 2 oz.**
- ¼ cup queen manzanilla olives, sliced into rings, about 1 oz.**
- 1 Tbs. non-pareil capers, rinsed**
- Lemon wedges, to serve**

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Prepare a large ice bath. Blanch the artichokes

until the heart is just easily pierced, about 5 minutes, then transfer to the ice bath. Blanch the carrots until just tender, 2 to 3 minutes, then transfer to the ice bath. Blanch the snap peas and asparagus together until crisp tender, 1 to 2 minutes, then transfer to the ice bath. Drain the vegetables in a colander and rinse with cold water until all the ice has melted or can be removed. Pat the vegetables dry with a paper towel.

Meanwhile, in a large skillet over medium heat, add the butter and oil and heat until the butter has melted. Add the garlic and cook until it is golden, about 1 minute. Add the dill, ½ tsp. salt, and ¼ tsp. pepper and whisk until thoroughly combined. Add the blanched vegetables, the peppers, olives, and capers and toss to coat. Transfer to a warm platter and garnish with additional dill and lemon wedges.



## DILL

*Anethum graveolens.* Tender, feathery, blue-green fronds branching off a central stem.

## FLAVORS

Mellow parsley with warm spices.

## HANDLING TIPS

Far less assertive than dill seed. Use liberally. Pick off whole fronds or roughly chop to add at the end of cooking or to use in cold dishes.

## GOOD IN OR WITH

Most closely associated with Scandinavian and Eastern European cooking. Add to cold potato salads, cucumbers, and deviled eggs as well as hot potato soups, steamed beets or beet soups, omelets, and dishes enriched with sour cream. Pair with delicate meats like veal or chicken and with mild-flavored fish. Use in baked goods, including breads and biscuits.





## shrimp and cannellini salad with tarragon vinaigrette

*To make this light entrée feel a little heartier, serve it with some grilled bread or wedges of toasted pita.*

**Serves 4 as a main course, 6 as an appetizer**

- 2 Tbs. sherry vinegar**
- 1 Tbs. Dijon mustard**
- 1 Tbs. minced fresh tarragon; more whole leaves for garnish**
- 1 tsp. minced garlic**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 5 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil**
- 1 15- or 16-oz. can cannellini beans, rinsed and drained**
- 1 medium ripe tomato, cut into medium dice (about 1 cup)**
- 1 large shallot, sliced thinly into rings (about ¼ cup)**

**12 jumbo shrimp (16 to 20 count), peeled and deveined**

**1 medium head red-leaf lettuce (or a lettuce mix), washed, dried, and torn into bite-size pieces (about 8 cups)**

In a medium bowl, mix the sherry vinegar with the mustard, tarragon, garlic, and ¼ tsp. each salt and pepper. Slowly whisk in 4 Tbs. of the oil.

In a large bowl, combine the beans, tomato, and shallot. Add 3 Tbs. of the vinaigrette and stir gently to combine.

Toss the shrimp with the remaining 1 Tbs. oil and season with salt and a few grinds of

pepper. Heat a grill pan over high heat, then cook the shrimp until opaque throughout, 3 to 4 minutes per side.

Toss the lettuce with half of the remaining vinaigrette (add more to taste). For individual servings, portion the lettuce among the serving plates. Spoon the beans on top of the greens and top each salad with two or three shrimp, depending on how many servings you're making. To serve buffet style, arrange a layer of lettuce, the beans, and then the shrimp. Sprinkle with tarragon leaves and pepper. Serve immediately.







## TARRAGON

*Artemisia dracunculus sativa.*  
Large, shiny, toothed dark green leaves resembling its daisy relative. Most common cooking variety: French tarragon. Another variety: Russian tarragon (not recommended).

### FLAVORS

Sweet and spicy licorice.

### HANDLING TIPS

Flavors can dominate. Use judiciously. Chop roughly or finely and add toward end of cooking.

### GOOD IN OR WITH

Popular as an herbal vinegar for marinades and vinaigrettes. Use in French dishes such as béarnaise sauce and chicken with tarragon. Also a great partner for lobster, eggs, and spring vegetables.





## CILANTRO

*Coriandrum sativum*. Thin, rounded, toothed bright green leaves resembling flat-leaf parsley. Also called fresh coriander or Chinese parsley.

### FLAVORS

Tangy with citrus notes.

### HANDLING TIPS

Use liberally. Chop roughly or use whole sprigs and add just before serving. Use whole stems to flavor stocks and, when available, roots for curry paste. Flavor pales when heated.

### GOOD IN OR WITH

Use as a cooling, zesty counterpoint to the spice in Asian, Latin American, and Indian dishes. Great with chile and lime. Adds brightness to fresh fruit or tomato salsas. Purée with garlic and oil, like a pesto, to serve with grilled shrimp or flank steak.



## cilantro-pepita hummus

*This fluffy dip has a creamy, nutty flavor unlike anything you'll find in a grocery store. Serve with pita, cucumbers, peppers, or carrots. Serves 8 to 10; makes 2½ cups*

- 8 oz. dried chickpeas (about 1½ cups)**
- 1 tsp. baking soda**
- 2 to 3 medium cloves garlic, smashed and peeled**
- ½ cup tahini**
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice; more to taste**
- 1 tsp. fine sea salt; more to taste**
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- ¼ cup roasted pepitas**
- 2 Tbs. coarsely chopped fresh cilantro**
- Smoked paprika for garnish**

Soak the chickpeas in 8 cups cold water in the refrigerator for at least 8 hours and up to 24 hours. Drain.

In a large, heavy-duty pot, cook the chickpeas and baking soda over medium heat, stirring often, for 3 minutes. Add 8 cups fresh cold water and the garlic and bring to a boil. Immediately reduce the heat to a simmer and cook until the chickpeas are very tender throughout, about 1 hour. Reserve ¼ cup of the cooking liquid, and then drain the chickpeas.

Transfer the chickpeas to a large bowl, and cover with cold water. Gently agitate the

chickpeas with your fingers to help dislodge the skins. Stir with a skimmer or slotted spoon, and remove the skins as they rise to the surface. Drain well. Reserve 2 Tbs. of the chickpeas, and transfer the rest, including the garlic, to a food processor. Purée until the mixture balls up.

With the machine running, add the tahini, lemon juice, salt, and chickpea cooking liquid through the feed tube. Scrape down the sides, and purée until very smooth. Transfer to a bowl, cover, and refrigerate at least 30 minutes and up to 3 days. The hummus thickens and the flavors develop as it sits.

Just before serving, season to taste with more salt and lemon juice, if necessary. Use the back of a spoon to create a well on the surface of the hummus and drizzle on the olive oil. Scatter the pepitas, reserved chickpeas, cilantro, and paprika over the top, and serve.



### MAKE AHEAD

The hummus can be made up to 3 days ahead; garnish just before serving.





## PARSLEY

*Petroselinum crispum.* Vivid green toothed leaf clusters branching off a fibrous stem. Most common cooking varieties: Italian flat-leaf parsley and curly parsley.

### FLAVORS

Subtle, fresh celery and mild pepper.

### HANDLING TIPS

Versatile and widely complementary. Use generously. Chop leaves roughly or finely and add toward the end of cooking or use uncooked. Save stems for stock. Keeps its color well so can be chopped ahead.

### GOOD IN OR WITH

A centerpiece of Middle Eastern tabbouleh, French persillade, and Italian gremolata. Use as an all-purpose herb to add vibrancy to soups, sautéed vegetables, meats, and seafood. Use stems in bouquet garni for stocks, poaching liquids, and braises. Add leaves whole to salads or chopped as a fresh garnish to many dishes.

## spring vegetable and potato frittata

*This frittata is a great make-ahead dinner. Let it cool to room temperature and refrigerate until ready to use. It can be warmed in the microwave or served at room temperature. Serves 4*

- 8 large eggs**
- ¼ cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano (about ½ oz.)**
- 3 Tbs. chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- ½ tsp. cayenne**
- 2 to 3 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil**
- 1 medium Yukon Gold potato (about ½ lb.), scrubbed and cut into ½-inch dice (about 1½ cups)**
- 1 medium yellow onion, thinly sliced**
- ½ lb. medium-thick asparagus, trimmed and cut on the diagonal into 1-inch pieces**
- 3 cloves garlic, minced**
- 6 oz. shredded sharp Cheddar (about 1¾ lightly packed cups)**

In a medium bowl, whisk the eggs, Parmigiano, parsley, ½ tsp. salt, ½ tsp. pepper, and the cayenne.

Heat 2 Tbs. of the oil in a 10-inch ovenproof nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add the potato and ¼ tsp. salt and cook, stirring occasionally, until browned on several sides,

6 to 7 minutes. Transfer to a bowl with a slotted spoon. Reduce the heat to medium. If the pan is dry, add the remaining 1 Tbs. oil. Add the onion and cook, stirring frequently, until it softens and begins to brown, 4 to 5 minutes. Stir in the asparagus, garlic, ¼ tsp. salt and ½ tsp. pepper. Cook, stirring frequently, until the asparagus is bright green and crisp-tender, 3 to 4 minutes. Lower the heat to medium low and add the egg mixture and the potatoes, stirring until the ingredients are combined, 10 to 15 seconds. Add the Cheddar and stir until well distributed. Cook without stirring until the eggs have almost set, 10 to 12 minutes. (The center may still be loose but should be bubbling a little; the sides should be set.) Meanwhile, position an oven rack 6 inches from the broiler element and heat the broiler to high.

Transfer the skillet to the oven and broil until the eggs have set completely and the top of the frittata is golden brown, 1 to 3 minutes. Let rest for 5 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board, cut into four wedges, and serve.







## MINT

***Mentha spicata.*** Oval, toothed and wrinkled bright green leaves. Other mint varieties: peppermint, apple mint, chocolate mint, pineapple mint.

### FLAVORS

Vibrant, cooling, and sweet.

### HANDLING TIPS

Use liberally. Chop roughly or finely, or cut into thin ribbons and add toward the end of cooking or use raw.

### GOOD IN OR WITH

Add the standard mint sold for cooking to an array of savory dishes, from pasta to chutney; use to give a Mideastern or Indian accent. Traditionally used with lamb. Highlight fresh peas, new potatoes, and fruit salads. Infuse whole leaves in cream or milk for crème anglaise and chocolates; steep in boiling water to make refreshing tea. Use sprigs as decoration on dessert plates.



## pea and mint soup with lemon cream

*You can serve this soup hot or cold. Its flavor is brighter if you use very fresh, young peas. The starchiness of mature peas can give the soup a split-pea flavor, so if you can find only older peas, use frozen instead.* **Serves 4 to 6**

- 2 Tbs. unsalted butter**
- ½ cup coarsely chopped shallots**
- 1 tsp. minced garlic**
- 4 cups fresh shelled peas (3½ to 4 lb. unshelled) or frozen peas**
- 2 cups lower-salt chicken or vegetable broth**
- ½ cup chopped fresh mint**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- Pinch of granulated sugar (optional)**
- ½ cup heavy cream**

### **Finely grated zest of one-half medium lemon**

Melt the butter in a 3- to 4-quart saucepan over medium heat. Add the shallots and garlic and cook, stirring frequently, until both are very soft, 6 to 8 minutes. They shouldn't brown. If they're cooking too fast, reduce the heat to medium low.

Add the peas, broth, half of the mint, and 2 cups water. Season generously with salt and pepper. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to medium low, and





simmer vigorously until the peas are very tender, 8 to 10 minutes. In batches, purée the soup in a blender until smooth. Season to taste with salt and pepper. If the peas aren't very sweet, stir in the sugar.

Pour the heavy cream into a medium bowl and whip it to soft peaks with a whisk. Fold in the lemon zest and season to taste with salt and pepper.

Ladle the soup into serving bowls and top with a generous spoonful of the lemon cream. Scatter the remaining chopped mint over the soup and serve. If you choose to serve the soup cold, chill it in the fridge, but take it out 15 minutes before you serve. Adjust the seasoning if necessary before serving.



## jasmine rice with toasted pine nuts and chives

*Buttery, toasty pine nuts add a hit of richness to your basic rice pilaf. Serve this simple side with grilled chicken or seared scallops. Serves 4*

- 1 cup jasmine rice**
- Kosher salt**
- 3 Tbs. unsalted butter**
- ¼ cup pine nuts**
- 2 Tbs. chopped chives**
- 2 tsp. lemon juice**
- Freshly ground black pepper**

Cook the rice according to package directions with a pinch of salt. Meanwhile, melt the butter in a small skillet over medium heat. Add the pine nuts and cook until the butter and nuts are browned, about 3 minutes. Combine with the rice and add the chives and lemon juice. Season to taste with salt and pepper.



## CHIVES

*Allium schoenoprasum.*

Long, narrow, hollow bright green leaves; with edible pink bud clusters when in bloom.

### FLAVORS

Mild, fresh onion.

### HANDLING TIPS

Use liberally. Finely chop, snip, or when available, separate flower buds, and add just before serving. Turns drab green when heated.

### GOOD IN OR WITH

A pleasantly mild alternative to raw onion. Pair with potatoes, eggs, cheese, and cream. Use to garnish soups, salads, and sautéed vegetables, or smear into softened butter for corn on the cob.



# Vegetables, STEAMED & SAUCED

Five easy sauces dress up everything from baby artichokes to sugar snap peas.

MENTION “STEAMED VEGETABLES” and the first thing that pops into many people’s minds is bland, boring diet food. We couldn’t disagree more. Simple, yes. But boring? Definitely not. Steaming, one of the speediest cooking methods, is an excellent way to reveal the pure flavor of just about any vegetable. Drizzle on a quick, complementary sauce, and they really sing.

As you’ll find in the following sauces, spices and acidic ingredients like lemon juice and vinegar add brightness, while rich ingredients like cream, cheese, bacon, and tasty oils give the vegetables a fuller flavor. Here are a few pointers to keep in mind as you steam:

Don’t overload the steamer. Arrange the vegetables in a loose, shallow layer so the steam can cook them evenly.

Salt early. Sprinkling kosher salt on the vegetables right after they go into the steamer jump-starts the process of flavor release. You can salt later, too, but adding a little salt early on is a good practice.

Pay attention. The fatal flaw of many steamed vegetable dishes is improper doneness. They’re too soft or too crisp, whereas ideally they should be neither mushy nor crunchy but perfectly tender. Hitting that sweet spot is easier said than done, but it’s only a matter of attention and timing. So don’t wander far when the vegetables are in the steamer—the cooking happens quickly.

## lemony brown-butter sauce with chives

*For the freshest flavor, you won’t add the chives to the sauce. Instead, you’ll sprinkle them directly on the food. Yields about 6 Tbs., enough for 1 to 1½ lb. steamed vegetables*

- 4 Tbs. unsalted butter
- 2 Tbs. fresh lemon juice
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2 Tbs. thinly sliced chives

In a small (1-quart) saucepan, melt the butter over medium heat. Cook the butter, whisking constantly, just until the milk solids turn a nutty brown color, about

3 to 5 minutes. As soon as the butter is brown, take the pan off the heat and carefully pour in the lemon juice. Swirl to combine. Season with ¼ tsp. salt and ½ tsp. pepper, or to taste.

Drizzle the sauce over steamed vegetables and sprinkle with the chives.



### pair with

- Asparagus
  - Baby artichokes
  - Green beans
  - Brussels sprouts
  - Sugar snap peas
- To prep and cook, see the chart on p. 35.







## How to steam vegetables



**Trim and cut your vegetable** as directed in the chart on p. 35. Meanwhile, bring an inch or so of water to a boil over high heat in a pot fit with a steamer insert.



**Put the vegetables in the steamer**, sprinkle with kosher salt, cover tightly, and steam until just tender. The vegetables should be neither crisp nor soft but exactly in between. Bite into a piece to check.





## peppercorn-parmesan cream sauce

*Since this is basically a peppery Alfredo sauce, it's also good on pasta. The flavor depends on the cheese and the pepper, so be sure to use real, freshly grated Parmigiano and freshly ground black pepper. Yields about ½ cup, enough for 1 to 1½ lb. steamed vegetables*

- ¼ cup heavy cream
- ¼ cup whole milk
- 1 large egg yolk
- ¼ cup freshly and finely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 Tbs. coarsely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano for garnish (optional)

In a small (1-quart) saucepan, combine the cream, milk, and egg yolk. Whisk to blend thoroughly.

Place the saucepan over medium-low heat and cook, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon, until the sauce is hot and steamy and thickens slightly, 3 to 5 minutes. Don't let the sauce bubble at all or it may become a little lumpy. Remove from the

heat and immediately add the ¼ cup finely grated Parmigiano. Stir until the cheese is mostly melted. Season with ¼ tsp. salt and ⅓ tsp. pepper, or to taste.

Drizzle the sauce over steamed vegetables and sprinkle with the coarsely grated cheese, if using.

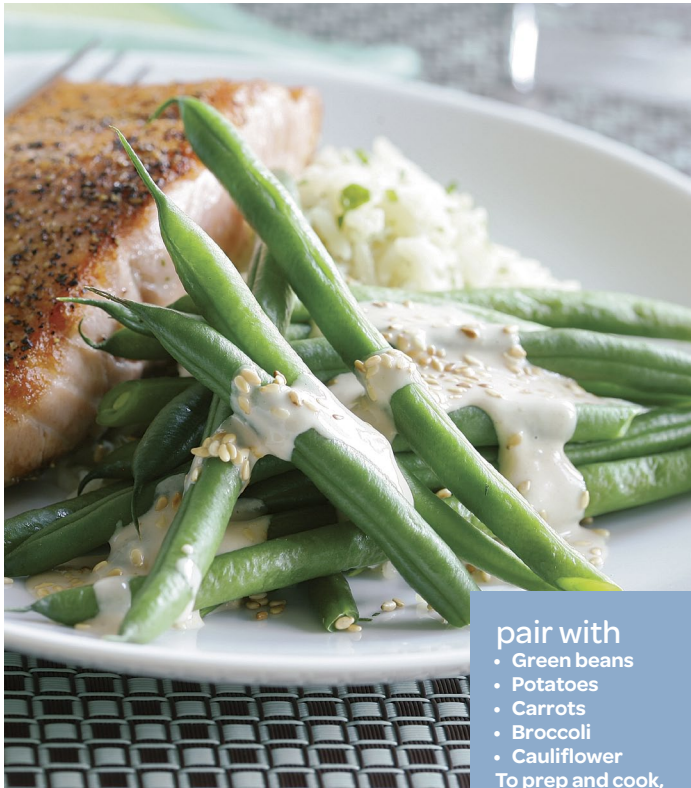


### pair with

- Broccolini
- Broccoli
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Brussels sprouts

To prep and cook, see the chart on the facing page.





**pair with**

- Green beans
- Potatoes
- Carrots
- Broccoli
- Cauliflower

To prep and cook, see the chart at right.

## lemony tahini sauce

Look for tahini in cans or jars on supermarket shelves near the peanut butter or in the ethnic or natural foods section. Yields about 6 Tbs., enough for 1 to 1½ lb. steamed vegetables

- 1 medium clove garlic**  
Kosher salt
- 3 Tbs. tahini (ground sesame seed paste)**
- 3 Tbs. fresh lemon juice**  
Pinch of ground cumin
- 2 tsp. toasted sesame seeds for garnish (optional)**

Peel the garlic clove and chop it finely. Sprinkle the chopped garlic with a pinch of salt and then use the flat side of your knife to repeatedly scrape the garlic against the cutting board, mashing it into a paste. Transfer the garlic paste to a small bowl and add the tahini. Whisk to blend. Gradually whisk in the lemon juice; at first the tahini will thicken, but as you add more and more lemon juice, it will begin to loosen. Once all of the lemon juice is added, whisk in water ½ Tbs. at a time until you reach the consistency of a creamy sauce. Stir in the cumin and more salt to taste.

Drizzle the sauce over steamed vegetables and sprinkle with the sesame seeds, if using.



## All the vegetables fit to steam (or at least many of them)

vegetable		how to prepare	steam-ing time
Artichokes, baby		Remove outer leaves and trim stem. Cut the artichoke in half lengthwise	5 to 6 minutes
Asparagus		Trim tough ends	4 to 6 minutes
Carrots		Peel and slice into ½-inch-thick rounds	6 to 8 minutes
Cauliflower		Core and cut into 1-inch florets	4 to 5 minutes
Broccoli crowns		Cut tops into 1-inch florets, stems ¼ inch thick	3 to 4 minutes
Broccolini		Trim the ends	5 to 6 minutes
Brussels sprouts		Trim bottom and halve through the base	5 to 6 minutes
Green beans		Trim stem ends	3 to 5 minutes
Potatoes, baby or fingerling		Scrub and quarter (halve fingerlings lengthwise)	10 to 15 minutes
Sugar snap peas		Rinse and remove stem end and string	5 to 6 minutes



## balsamic-bacon vinaigrette sauce

*The bold flavors of this vinaigrette result in a standout side.*

**Yields about 6 Tbs., enough for 1 to 1½ lb. steamed vegetables**

- 2 slices bacon, cut into ¼-inch dice**
- 1 small shallot, minced**
- 1½ Tbs. balsamic vinegar**
- 1 Tbs. fresh lemon juice**
- ¼ tsp. Dijon mustard**
- 3 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**

In a small (1-quart) saucepan over medium heat, cook the bacon, stirring occasionally, until crisp and golden, about 5 minutes. With a slotted spoon, transfer the bacon to a dish lined with paper towels, leaving the bacon fat in the pan. Add the

shallot to the bacon fat and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, 1 to 2 minutes. Add 1 Tbs. of the vinegar and scrape the bottom of the pan with a spoon to dissolve the browned bits stuck to the pan bottom. Off the heat, stir in the remaining ½ Tbs. vinegar, the lemon juice, and the mustard. Gradually whisk in the olive oil (don't worry if the sauce doesn't emulsify). Season with ¼ tsp. salt and ½ tsp. pepper, or to taste.

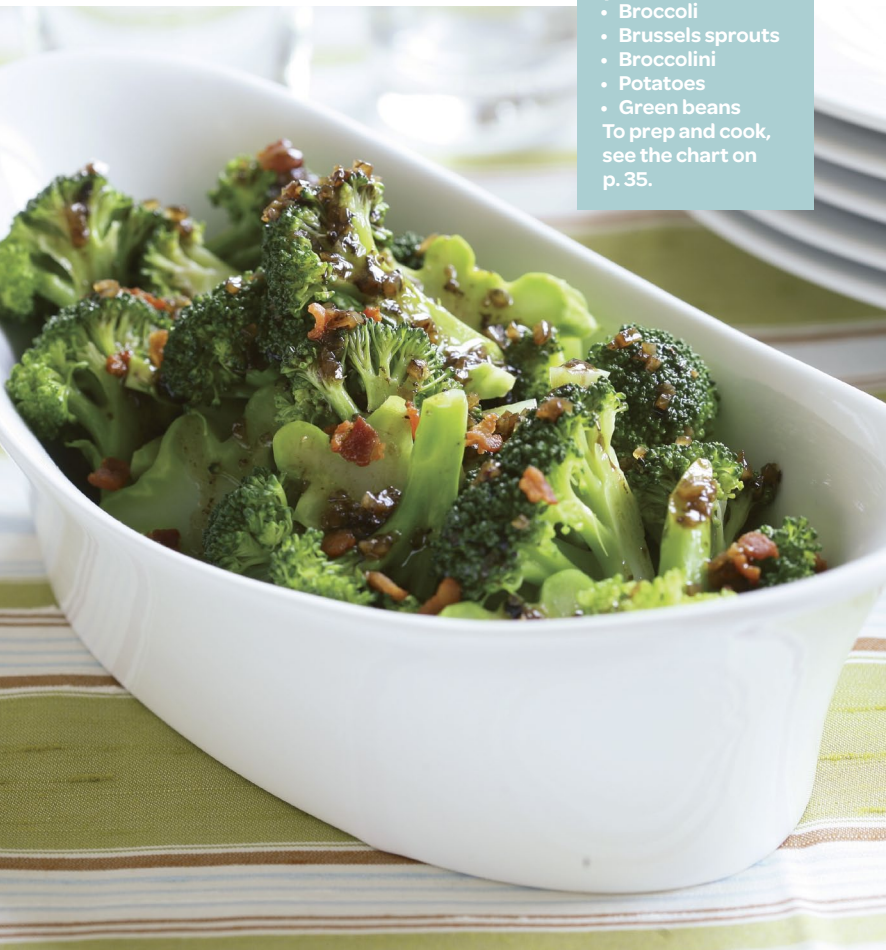
Drizzle the sauce over steamed vegetables and sprinkle with the cooked bacon bits.



### pair with

- Broccoli
- Brussels sprouts
- Broccolini
- Potatoes
- Green beans

To prep and cook, see the chart on p. 35.



## curry-yogurt sauce

*This delicious, spiced sauce has an inflection of Indian flavors. You can make it an hour or so ahead and reheat it gently before drizzling on the vegetables. Yields ½ cup, enough for 1 to 1½ lb. steamed vegetables*

- ½ cup plain yogurt, preferably whole milk**
- 1 tsp. cornstarch**
- 2 Tbs. unsalted butter**
- ½ cup minced yellow onion (about half a small onion)**
- Kosher salt**
- 1 tsp. minced garlic**
- 1 tsp. minced fresh ginger**
- ½ tsp. curry powder**
- ¼ tsp. ground cumin**
- Freshly ground black pepper**
- 2 Tbs. coarsely chopped fresh cilantro for garnish (optional)**

In a small bowl, stir together the yogurt and cornstarch until well blended.

In a small (1-quart) saucepan, melt the butter over medium heat. Add the onion, sprinkle with a pinch of salt, and cook, stirring frequently, until softened, 4 to 5 minutes. Add the garlic and ginger and cook, stirring frequently, until just golden brown, 4 to 5 minutes more (reduce the heat if the onion seems to be burning rather than browning). Add the curry powder and cumin and cook, stirring, 15 to 20 seconds. Reduce the heat to medium low, add the yogurt mixture, and stir until slightly thickened, about 1 minute. Season with ¼ tsp. each salt and pepper, or to taste.

Drizzle the sauce over steamed vegetables and sprinkle with the cilantro, if using.

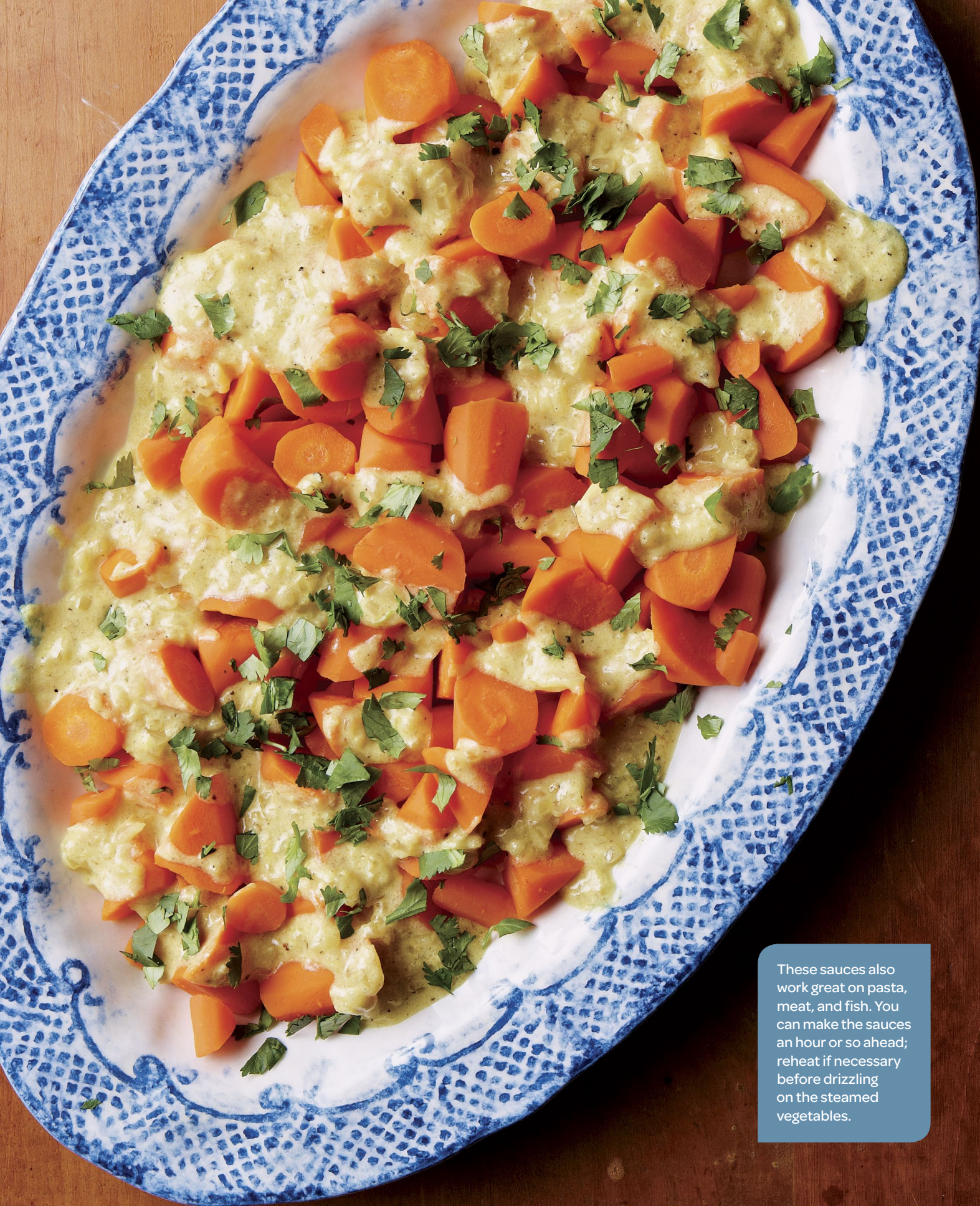


### pair with

- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Potatoes
- Green beans

To prep and cook, see the chart on p. 35.





These sauces also work great on pasta, meat, and fish. You can make the sauces an hour or so ahead; reheat if necessary before drizzling on the steamed vegetables.



# Easy SPRING Supper

Relax...this fresh, flavorful menu is  
practically stress-free.

HAPPILY, YOU DON'T NEED A LOT OF TIME TO pull together a satisfying evening of friends, family, and great food. The menu here is very relaxed—no individual appetizers, a main dish that's all in one bowl—and it's full of the fresh spring flavors that we're all craving about now, yet it still has some substance to counteract any lingering chill of winter.

To start, you'll make an easy spread of goat cheese with lots of fresh herbs, lemon zest, olive oil, and a dash of white wine for tang. Your friends just want to hang out in the kitchen with you anyway, so set a platter of this cheese on the counter along with good crackers and lots of raw vegetables. The cheese

spread can be made a couple of days ahead or at the last minute.

Next is a main-dish salad of greens, herbs, and roasted chicken. The only part of this dish that requires fussing is the dressing, which is a savory-citrusy mix of lemon and some of the chicken pan drippings. The chicken and vegetables should be served slightly warm but not hot, so there's no rush to the table with this dish. Pair the salad with a warm, crusty loaf of garlic-Parmesan bread, and dinner is served.

Dessert is a fun and delicious recipe that's so dead-easy it'll take you only a few minutes to pull off. It's a riff on the Famous Chocolate Wafer Refrigerator Roll, with the addition

of raspberries (frozen are perfect) and the subtraction of the need to spread and stack all those cookies. In this version, you just crunch up the cookies and fold them into raspberry-swirled whipped cream. To serve, you scoop out spoonfuls as you would with a mousse.

If you have a couple of hours before your friends are coming over, you can easily concoct this entire menu. But if you plan ahead a bit, you can get the first course and dessert finished a day ahead, leaving just the salad to make before—or as—your guests arrive. And that's a reality anyone can face, relaxed and refreshed.







## *menu*

Serves 6

Goat cheese spread with  
herbs and olive oil

Garlic-parmesan bread

Salad of roast chicken and  
spring vegetables with  
lemony dressing

Chocolate-raspberry  
cookies and cream









### real baby carrots

Bagged stubby carrot nubbins may be called baby carrots, but they're actually mature carrots that have been whittled down to bite-size pieces. True baby carrots are immature and look like the ones pictured above. Real baby carrots are tender and juicy; they're usually just 4 to 5 inches long and are generally sold in bunches, with their tops on.

## salad of roast chicken and spring vegetables with lemony dressing

*The chicken and vegetables should be served slightly warm but not hot.* **Serves 6**

- 6 medium bone-in, skin-on chicken breast halves**
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 1 Tbs. fresh thyme leaves**
- 1 lb. asparagus, woody ends trimmed**
- 1 lb. trimmed baby carrots (or larger carrots, peeled, halved crosswise, and thick halves split lengthwise)**
- ¾ cup fresh lemon juice; more if needed**
- 1 tsp. finely grated lemon zest**
- ¼ tsp. Dijon mustard**
- 6 cups salad greens (such as bibb lettuce torn into pieces with some sliced radicchio added for color)**
- 1 medium fennel bulb, trimmed, cut in half lengthwise, cored, and sliced crosswise as finely as possible**
- ½ cup fresh flat parsley leaves**
- ½ cup fresh mint leaves (torn into bite-size pieces if large)**
- ⅓ cup pine nuts, lightly toasted**
- Thin shavings Parmigiano-Reggiano (use a vegetable peeler)**

Position racks in the top and bottom thirds of the oven. Heat the oven to 400°F.

Arrange the chicken in a shallow, flame-proof roasting pan, rub each breast with olive oil, and season both sides generously with salt and pepper. Sprinkle the thyme on top

of the chicken breasts. Roast skin-side up in the oven on the upper rack until the juices run clear (an instant-read thermometer should register 165°F), 35 to 45 minutes.

Meanwhile, put the asparagus in a medium baking dish (9x13-inch, or one in which they'll fit in a single, uncrowded layer). Drizzle on enough olive oil to coat, season with salt and pepper, and toss. Arrange in a single layer. In a separate dish, do the same with the carrots. Roast the vegetables on the lower rack along with the chicken until they're tender, 12 to 16 minutes for the asparagus and 20 to 30 minutes for the carrots. The carrots can be roasted very deeply, but take care not to over-roast the asparagus or they'll turn mushy. When the vegetables are done, set them aside.

When the chicken is done, transfer the breasts to a platter and tent with foil. Pour any juices and fat from the roasting pan into a small bowl (don't worry if there isn't much). Put the roasting pan on a burner over medium heat. Add 3 Tbs. of the lemon juice to the pan and, using a wooden spoon or spatula, quickly scrape up all the browned juices, dissolving them in the lemon. Pour this into the bowl with the cooking juices. Once the chicken has rested for about 10 minutes, uncover and add any accumulated juices to the bowl. Whisk in the lemon zest, mustard, and enough olive

oil to balance the acidity of the lemon juice. Season to taste with salt and pepper. You should have about ½ cup dressing.

When the chicken is cool enough to handle but still quite warm, slide your fingers between the meat and the bones and pull the meat and skin away in one piece (the tenderloin may come off in a separate piece). Cut each breast (and tenderloin) into about 6 slices on the diagonal, keeping them intact so you can fan them out on the salad later.

Put the greens, fennel, and fresh herb sprigs into a large bowl. Toss with the remaining 1 Tbs. of lemon juice and about 2 Tbs. of olive oil, adding more if needed to lightly coat the salad. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

On six large plates or a large platter, arrange a bed of the greens. On each plate, or alternating on the platter, lay a fan of chicken meat on one side, a few spears of asparagus on another side, and some carrots on another. Drizzle the dressing over the meat and vegetables. Sprinkle with the pine nuts and top with the Parmigiano shavings. Serve immediately.





## *timeline*

This timeline breaks down each recipe into its make-ahead components, but don't worry if you can't get to all of them ahead of time. You could actually make everything (except the dessert, which benefits from an overnight chill) in the couple of hours before your guests arrive.

### THE DAY BEFORE

- Shop for all groceries; put white wine in fridge.
- Make cheese spread. Wash tomatoes. Wash and trim celery and refrigerate in an airtight container.
- Make butter-Parmesan mixture for garlic bread; refrigerate.
- Lightly toast pine nuts for salad.

### THE NIGHT BEFORE

- Make the cookie-and-cream dessert; refrigerate.

### A COUPLE OF HOURS AHEAD

- Prep chicken, asparagus, and carrots, and put them in their own baking dishes.
- Remove butter-Parmesan mixture from fridge to soften. Butter bread and wrap in foil.
- Wash greens and herbs for salad.

### AN HOUR BEFORE GUESTS ARRIVE

- Heat oven. Roast chicken. After 10 to 15 minutes, start roasting asparagus and carrots, too.
- Shave Parmigiano-Reggiano and prepare fennel for salad. Zest and juice lemon for dressing.
- Remove chicken and vegetables from oven when done; let chicken rest in a warm place. Increase oven temperature to 425°F.

### AS GUESTS ARRIVE

- Pour wine or other drinks.
- Unmold cheese spread onto a platter. Garnish with oil and reserved zest and herbs. Arrange vegetables around the cheese, and set out for everyone to serve themselves.
- Put garlic bread in oven.

### AS GUESTS NIBBLE THE APPETIZER

- Make the lemony dressing. Toss salad greens with oil and lemon juice, and compose the individual salads. Dress salads, garnish, and serve, along with garlic bread.

### AFTER THE SALAD

- Break away from the table to start the coffee or tea. Scoop cookies and cream into individual bowls, decorate with a whole chocolate wafer and drizzle on raspberry sauce. Serve.







## garlic-parmesan bread

*This easy garlic and cheese mixture adds the right amount of flavor to artisan breads. Serves 6*

- 8 Tbs. (½ cup) salted butter, softened**
- ¼ cup lightly packed finely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano**
- 1 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil**
- 2 large cloves garlic, very finely minced or grated on a rasp-style grater**
- 1 tsp. finely grated lemon zest**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 1 medium loaf artisan-style bread with a tight crumb**

Heat the oven to 425°F.

In a food processor or a large bowl, combine the butter, Parmigiano, oil, garlic, lemon zest, ¼ tsp. salt, and ½ tsp. pepper. Pulse a few times to blend but don't over-process or the butter might separate. If mixing by hand, mash together with a fork or a wooden spoon.

Slice the bread 1 inch thick, cutting almost but not all the way through the bottom crust so it's easy to pull apart. Spread a light, even coating of the butter mixture on both sides of each slice of bread. (You may not need all the butter; refrigerate any leftover for up to a week or freeze for up to three months.) Wrap the bread in foil and put the loaf on a baking sheet to catch any butter that runs out. Heat in the oven for about 15 minutes, then open the top of the foil to slightly crisp the top of the loaf, about 5 more minutes. Serve while hot.



## shopping list

### FRESH PRODUCE

- 6 cups salad greens
- 1 lb. asparagus
- 1 lb. trimmed baby carrots
- 1 medium fennel bulb
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes
- 1 celery heart
- 2 to 3 lemons
- 2 bunches fresh herbs (choose 2 of the following: parsley, chives, tarragon, dill)
- 1 bunch fresh thyme (1 Tbs. of leaves)
- 1 large bunch flat-leaf parsley (½ cup leaves)
- 1 large bunch fresh mint (½ cup leaves and garnish)

### MEAT, EGGS & DAIRY

- 6 medium bone-in, skin-on chicken breast halves

### OTHER GROCERIES

- 1 package good crackers or loaf of walnut bread
- 1 medium loaf artisan bread with a tight crumb
- 1 package Famous Chocolate Wafer thin chocolate cookies
- 3 cups (about 12 oz.) frozen raspberries
- 1 package pine nuts (⅓ cup)
- 1 bottle dry white wine (2 Tbs.)
- 8 oz. (about 1 cup) goat cheese
- 1 block Parmigiano-Reggiano (for shaving and grating)
- 1 carton heavy cream (at least a cup)
- ⅓ cup crème fraîche

### PANTRY STAPLES

- 1 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 1 head garlic
- ¼ tsp. Dijon mustard
- 8 Tbs. (1 stick) salted butter
- 5 Tbs. granulated sugar





## goat cheese spread with herbs and olive oil

Elevate plain goat cheese with a zesty mixture of herbs, wine, and citrus. **Yields about 1½ cups; serves 6**

- 8 oz. goat cheese (about 1 cup)**
- 2 Tbs. heavy cream; more if needed**
- 2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil; more for drizzling**
- 2 Tbs. dry white wine**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 2 Tbs. chopped fresh herbs (choose at least two from the following: parsley, chives, tarragon, dill)**
- 1 Tbs. finely grated lemon zest**
- Good crackers or slices of walnut bread**
- About 1 pint cherry tomatoes**
- 1 celery heart, cut into sticks**

Put the goat cheese, cream, olive oil, and wine in a food processor (or mix in a bowl with a wooden spoon). Pulse just to blend. The mixture should be spreadable; if it's too

thick, add 1 or 2 Tbs. more cream and pulse again. Season with salt and pepper, pulse again, and taste, adjusting the seasoning as necessary. Reserve 1 tsp. of the herbs for sprinkling, and add the rest to the processor. Add 2 tsp. of the lemon zest. Pulse once more to blend.

Line a small (about 1½-cup) round bowl or cup with a sheet of plastic wrap and fill with the cheese mixture. Cover and chill for at least 30 minutes and up to 24 hours.

To serve, invert the bowl onto a serving platter and peel off the plastic. With the back of a spoon, level off the top of the cheese and make a small depression. Drizzle olive oil over the top. Sprinkle with the reserved herbs and lemon zest. Arrange the crackers or bread slices, tomatoes, and celery around the cheese and let guests serve themselves.





## chocolate-raspberry cookies and cream

*This is best with both crème fraîche and heavy cream, but you can use all cream if that's easier. Yields 2½ cups cream and ¾ cup sauce; serves 6*

- 3 cups frozen raspberries (about 12 oz.), thawed**
- 5 Tbs. granulated sugar; more if needed**
- Few drops of fresh lemon juice**
- Kosher salt**
- ¾ cup heavy cream**
- ½ cup crème fraîche**
- 21 Famous Chocolate Wafer thin chocolate cookies**
- 6 cute mint sprigs**

Put 1 cup of the raspberries in a small bowl, sprinkle with 2 Tbs. of the sugar, mash with a fork, and let sit a few minutes.

Meanwhile, put the remaining 2 cups berries and another 2 Tbs. sugar in a food processor (or blender) and process until the berries form a purée. Strain through a fine-mesh strainer into a small bowl, pressing with a rubber spatula to get the seeds out. Squeeze in a few drops of lemon juice and a

tiny pinch of salt. Taste and add more sugar or lemon if needed. The sauce should be thin enough to drizzle. If it seems too thick, add a few drops of water. Cover and refrigerate.

In a medium bowl, combine the cream, the crème fraîche, and the remaining 1 Tbs. sugar and whip with a hand mixer until the mixture forms firm, thick peaks. Stir the mashed berries and sugar and lightly fold into the cream mixture with a rubber spatula, leaving streaks.

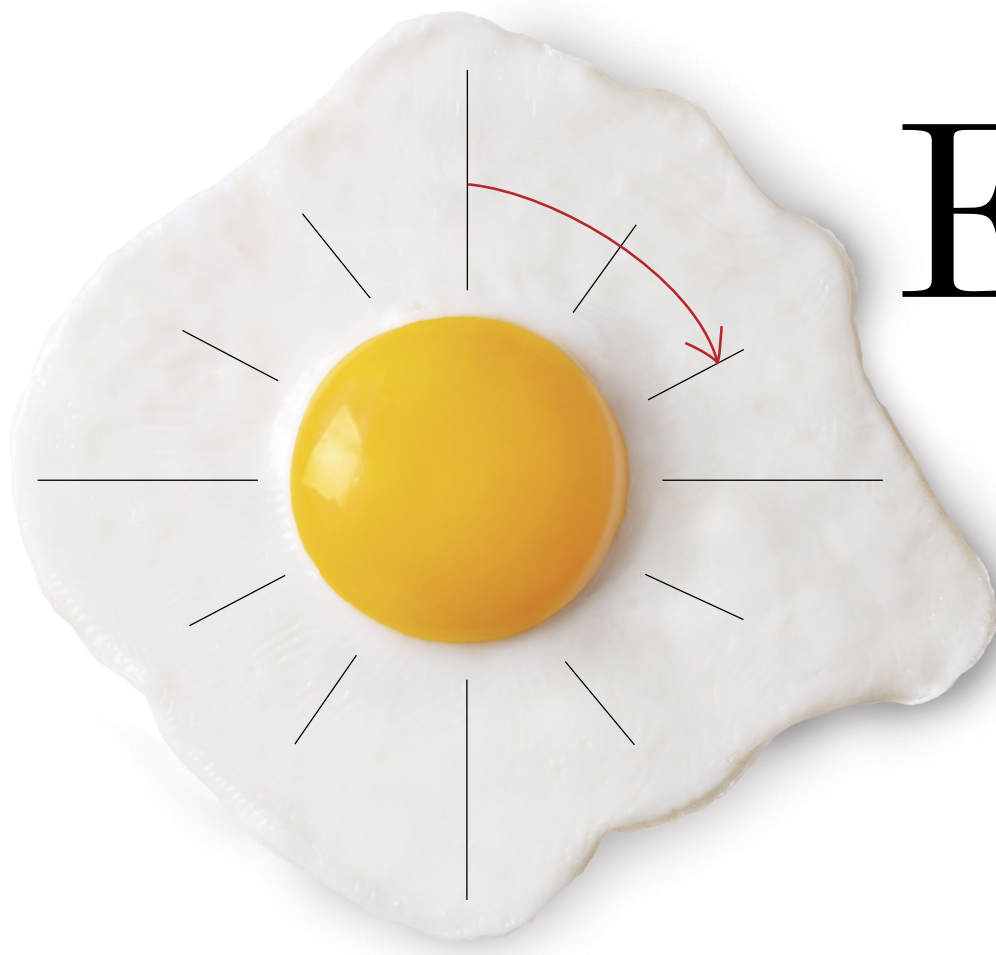
Reserve 6 of the cookies for decoration and crunch up the rest into uneven pieces—

not too small. Fold the cookies into the cream. Cover with plastic wrap, pressing the wrap onto the surface of the cream, and chill until the cookie pieces are thoroughly softened, at least 2 hours and preferably overnight.

To serve, use an ice cream scoop or large spoon to scoop out a mound of cookies and cream into a small bowl or onto a plate. Drizzle a ribbon of raspberry sauce around the plate, tuck a cookie into the cream, and decorate with a mint sprig.







# EGGS *in* 10

Ten incredible egg dishes  
that take about  
10 minutes (or less).

## 1. smoked salmon salad with soft-boiled eggs

*This dish combines favorite bagel toppings like capers, dill, and smoked salmon in a light yet satisfying salad. Serve with pumpernickel toast. Serves 4*

Bring a 1-quart saucepan of water to a boil. Using a slotted spoon, gently lower 4 large **eggs** into the water, reduce the heat to medium low, cover, and cook for 4 minutes. Drain and immediately transfer the eggs to a large bowl of cold water.

Meanwhile, whisk 1 tsp. **Dijon mustard** with 1 Tbs. fresh **lemon juice**. Whisking constantly, slowly drizzle in 3 Tbs. **extra-virgin olive oil**. Stir in 3 Tbs. chopped fresh **dill**.

In a large bowl, mix 8 oz. trimmed, coarsely chopped **watercress**, 6 oz. thinly sliced **smoked salmon** torn into bite-size pieces, and ½ finely chopped small **sweet onion**. Toss with the vinaigrette and divide among 4 plates. Divide 2 Tbs. drained and rinsed **capers** among the plates. Peel and halve the eggs. Arrange them on the salads, sprinkle with **kosher salt**, and serve.





It's not news that you can cook eggs in 10 minutes—scrambled eggs have long been a quick fallback meal for people who are short on time and groceries. But you can do so much more in a very short amount of time. Try any one of the flavor-packed, globally inspired recipes here, and you'll never look at eggs as a last resort again.



## 2. pineapple matzo brei

*Matzo brei (rhymes with “fry”) is a traditional Passover dish made from matzo fried with eggs in a sort of pancake or a looser scramble, like this one. Here, it’s sweetened with orange juice, fresh pineapple, and maple syrup. Serves 4*

Break 4 sheets of unsalted **matzo** into ½- to 1-inch pieces (it’s OK if they’re uneven). In a colander, rinse the pieces under hot water. In a large bowl, whisk 3 large **eggs** with 3 Tbs. fresh **orange juice**, 1 tsp. granulated **sugar**, and ¼ tsp. **kosher salt**. Add the matzo pieces, and

let sit while you melt 2 Tbs. **unsalted butter** in a 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add the mixture to the skillet, and cook, stirring constantly with a wooden spatula, until the eggs are softly set, about 3 minutes. Stir in ½ cup chopped fresh **pineapple** and cook, patting the mixture down, until the edges turn golden, about 2 minutes. Season to taste with salt, garnish with small **mint leaves**, and serve with **maple syrup**.







### 3. curried egg salad and cucumber sandwiches





*Egg salad in 10 minutes? Yep. The trick to quickly hard-cooking eggs is to boil water in the microwave, then add the eggs for a short time so they don't explode. Serves 2*

Put 2 cups water in a wide, shallow, microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on high until the water boils, about 3 minutes. Gently lower 4 large **eggs** into the water, and microwave on high 4 minutes more. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, whisk ½ cup **mayonnaise** with ¾ tsp. **curry powder**, ¾ tsp. **cumin**, and ½ tsp. **kosher salt**. Toast 4 slices of **white sandwich bread**. Thinly slice ¼ **English cucumber** on a sharp diagonal.

Cool the eggs under cold water, peel, and mash with a fork in a medium bowl. Stir in the curry mayonnaise and ½ cup **golden raisins**. Assemble sandwiches with the toast, cucumber slices, egg salad, and 2 **red leaf lettuce** leaves. Serve.  

### 4. lemony egg soup with peas

*Adding lemon and egg to broth—as in the Greek soup avgolemono—makes it velvety. Peas lend a sweet, springy flavor. Serves 4 as a first course*

In a 3-quart saucepan, melt 1 Tbs. **unsalted butter** over medium heat. Add 1 tsp. finely chopped **shallot** and cook, stirring, until tender, about 2 minutes. Add 1 quart **lower-salt chicken broth** and 3 Tbs. fresh **lemon juice**; bring to a gentle simmer. Meanwhile, whisk 2 large **eggs** with ½ tsp. **kosher salt** and ¼ tsp. freshly ground **black pepper**. Reduce the heat to medium low, and slowly whisk in the eggs. Add 2 Tbs. finely grated **Parmigiano-Reggiano**, season to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper, and divide among 4 soup bowls. Divide 2 cups thawed frozen **peas** among the bowls and serve.    





## 5. spinach-noodle soup with poached eggs

*Instant ramen, that old dorm-room standby, gets a massive upgrade when you ditch the artificial flavor packet in favor of fragrant aromatics and fresh spinach. Serves 2*

In a 4- to 5-quart pot, heat 1 Tbs. **canola oil** over medium-low heat. Add ½ small finely chopped **yellow onion**, and cook, stirring occasionally, until translucent, about 2 minutes. Add 6 cups **lower-salt chicken broth**, 1 smashed clove of

**garlic**, 2 thin slices of **ginger**, and ½ tsp. **kosher salt**. Bring to a boil over high heat. Add 6 oz. instant **ramen noodles** (discard seasoning packets) and 1 oz. (1 packed cup) **baby spinach** and cook, stirring to break apart the noodles, until they sink and the spinach is wilted, about 1 minute. Crack 2 large **eggs** into the pot, cover, and turn off the heat. Let sit until the whites have set, about 3 minutes. Divide between 2 bowls, top with a dash of **Sriracha** or other hot sauce and a drizzle of **Asian sesame oil**, and serve.



## 6. tomato-harissa poached eggs

*This is a quick version of a Middle Eastern dish called shakshuka. Harissa, a spicy North African pepper paste, adds a complex, mellow heat in place of the more traditional fresh chile peppers. Feel free to add extra heat with red pepper flakes or more harissa. Serves 4*

Heat 2 Tbs. **olive oil** in a heavy-duty 12-inch skillet over medium-high heat. Coarsely chop 1 small **yellow onion** and cook, stirring, until tender, about 2 minutes. Add 1 minced medium clove **garlic** and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add one 28-oz. can **chopped tomatoes** with juice,

1 large coarsely chopped red or orange **bell pepper**, 3 Tbs. **harissa**, ¼ tsp. ground **cumin**, and ¼ tsp. **kosher salt**, and bring to a simmer.

Reduce the heat to medium, crack 4 large **eggs** into the sauce, cover, and cook until the whites are set, about 3 minutes. Season each egg with kosher salt. Garnish with 2 Tbs. chopped fresh **flat-leaf parsley**, and serve with 4 warmed **pitas**.







## 7. wild mushroom salad with fried eggs

Sunny-side-up eggs top savory mushrooms and greens dressed in a rosemary-laced Champagne vinaigrette. Adding water and covering the eggs while cooking is a hybrid fry-and-steam method that prevents rubbery whites.

**Serves 2**

In a 12-inch nonstick skillet, melt 2 Tbs. **unsalted butter** over medium heat. Add 2 finely chopped medium cloves **garlic**, 8 oz. sliced **mixed mushrooms**, ¼ tsp. **kosher salt**, and ¼ tsp. freshly ground **black pepper**; cook until the mushrooms are lightly browned, about 4 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a small bowl, whisk together 2 Tbs. **extra-**

**virgin olive oil**, 2 tsp. **Champagne vinegar**, 1 tsp. **Dijon mustard**, 1 tsp. finely chopped **shallot**, and ¼ tsp. chopped fresh **rosemary**. Season 5 oz. **baby greens** with salt and pepper and dress lightly with the vinaigrette. Divide the greens between 2 dinner plates. Top each with half of the mushroom mixture.

Wipe out the skillet and melt another 1 Tbs. **unsalted butter** over medium heat. Crack 2 large **eggs** into the skillet, and carefully drizzle 2 Tbs. water around them. Season the eggs with salt and pepper, cover, and cook until the whites are set, about 3 minutes. Top each salad with an egg and pass the remaining dressing at the table.



## 8. scrambled egg torta

*Tortas are big, flavorful, overstuffed Mexican sandwiches. This one—filled with scrambled eggs, mild cheese, bright cilantro, creamy avocado, and tangy lime juice—makes a tasty and hearty meal for any time of the day. Serves 2*

Halve and toast 2 **crusty rolls**. Melt 1 Tbs. **unsalted butter** in a 10-inch nonstick skillet over medium heat. In a small bowl, whisk 3 large **eggs** with a pinch of **kosher salt**, then pour into the skillet. Cook, stirring constantly with a silicone spatula, until the eggs are set, about 2 minutes. Remove from the heat.

In another small bowl, crumble ¼ cup (2 oz.) **queso fresco or feta** and mix with 2 Tbs. chopped **cilantro**. In another small bowl, mash ½ medium **avocado** with ½ tsp. fresh **lime juice** and a pinch of salt. Spread the cheese mixture on the bottom halves of the buns and the mashed avocado on the top halves. Divide the eggs between the two buns, season with salt and pepper, and top each with 2 thin, lightly salted slices of **tomato** and 1 or 2 very thin slices of **red onion**. Add a dash of **hot sauce**, if you like, then close the sandwiches and serve.







## 9. poached egg and asparagus toasts with lemon-chive beurre blanc

*This quick take on eggs Benedict eschews Hollandaise sauce and ham in favor of tangy beurre blanc and fresh asparagus. It takes slightly more than 10 minutes, but it looks and tastes as if it took twice as long. Serves 4*

Fill a 3-quart saucepan with 2 inches of water and bring to a boil.

Meanwhile, split and toast 2 **English muffins**.

Boil 8 stalks of **asparagus**, trimmed and halved crosswise, until crisp-tender, 3 to 4 minutes. With a slotted spoon or tongs, transfer to a paper towel-lined plate.

Add ½ tsp. **cider vinegar** to the water, and bring to a simmer. One at a time, crack 4 large **eggs** into a small bowl and gently slide each egg into the water. Poach until the whites are set, 2 to 3 minutes. With a slotted spoon, remove the eggs from the water in the order they were added and gently blot dry with a paper towel.

While the asparagus and eggs cook, cut 4 oz. unsalted **butter** into ½-inch pieces. In an 8-inch skillet, combine ¼ cup **white wine**, 3 Tbs. fresh **lemon juice**, and 1 Tbs. finely chopped **shallot**. Bring to a simmer over medium-high heat and cook until the liquid has reduced to about 1 Tbs. Turn the heat to low and whisk in the butter a few pieces at a time. It should melt gradually to form a creamy sauce. Stir in 1 Tbs. thinly sliced fresh **chives**. Season to taste with **kosher salt** and freshly ground **black pepper**. Top the English muffins with the asparagus, eggs, and sauce. Pass any remaining at the table.



## 10. shrimp, bacon, and egg pancake

*Inspired by Japanese okonomiyaki, a thick, overstuffed egg pancake, this dish is satisfying enough for a meal, or you can cut it smaller for a delicious appetizer.*

**Serves 4 as a main course, 8 as a first course**

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the broiler on high. Heat 1 Tbs. **peanut oil** in a 12-inch cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat. Add 2 strips thick-cut **bacon**, cut crosswise into ½-inch strips, and cook until crisp, about 6 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the bacon to a large bowl and set the skillet aside.

Meanwhile, in a small bowl, combine 3 Tbs. reduced-sodium **soy sauce**, 1 finely chopped clove **garlic**, and ½ tsp. grated fresh **ginger**; set aside.

Whisk 6 large **eggs**, ¼ cup (1½ oz.) all-purpose **flour**, ½ tsp. **white pepper**, and ½ tsp. **kosher salt** with the bacon.

Fold in 1 loosely packed cup shredded **green cabbage**, ¼ cup thinly sliced **scallions**, and 12 cooked peeled **small shrimp** (51 to 60 per lb.). Pour the mixture into the bacon fat in the skillet, using a large spatula to spread evenly. Broil until the egg is set and golden, about 3 minutes. Slide onto a platter, slice, and serve with the dipping sauce.







SE\*



# 10 WAYS TO COOK WITH CULTURE

Tangy yogurt is a star in dressings, dips, and more.

Although yogurt is a go-to breakfast or snack for most of us, its tart flavor and smooth texture also make it versatile for cooking. This naturally creamy ingredient can be used in so many different ways—

from marinades and batters to baked goods and frozen desserts—so stock up on extra cartons of yogurt and start cooking.

## 1. DOLLOP ON TOP

### smoked trout and bean salad

*This ingenious combination of tangy yogurt, oil-cured olives, fresh cucumbers, and bunches of fragrant herbs, along with hearty beans and smoky fish, offers intriguing flavors in every bite. Serves 6 as a main course, 10 to 12 as a starter or side*

- 12 oz. (2¾ cups) green beans (or an assortment of string beans), string removed if tough, cut into ½-inch pieces
- ½ cup sunflower seed or grapeseed oil, preferably unfiltered
- 4 cups cooked cranberry or cannellini beans (fresh, dried, or canned)
- 2 small or 1 large cucumber, peeled if skin is tough, cut into ½-inch dice (about 3 cups)
- 1 cup oil-cured black olives, pitted and halved (see Test Kitchen, p. 86)
- ½ cup finely chopped red onion
- ½ cup toasted sunflower seeds
- ¼ cup chopped fresh curly parsley, 1 tsp. reserved for garnish

- ¼ cup chopped fresh dill, 1 tsp. reserved for garnish
- 3 Tbs. fresh lemon juice
- 3 Tbs. red-wine vinegar
- 2 Tbs. fresh marjoram leaves, coarsely chopped, 1 tsp. reserved for garnish
- 1 Tbs. finely grated lemon zest
- 2 medium cloves garlic, finely chopped
- Kosher or sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 cup plain Greek yogurt
- 8 to 10 oz. skinless smoked trout fillet

In a 12-inch skillet, cook the green beans in the oil over medium heat until they begin to sizzle, 1 minute.

Add 1 Tbs. water, cover, and steam until crisp-tender, about 4 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl and let cool to room temperature, about 15 minutes.

Add the cranberry beans, cucumber, olives, onion, sunflower seeds, parsley, dill, lemon juice, vinegar, marjoram, lemon zest, and garlic. Season to taste with salt and pepper and mix gently.

Arrange the salad on a large serving platter and top with dollops of yogurt. Crumble the trout into chunks and scatter over the top. Garnish with the reserved herbs and more black pepper and serve.







## 2. BAKE A CAKE

### yogurt cake with chocolate ganache frosting

*Yogurt adds moisture to this dense cake's crumb and a light tartness that breaks up the richness of the ganache frosting. Dairy tends to dull the flavor of cocoa, so the cake here is vanilla, but chocolate lovers can still get their fix from the heavenly chocolate ganache icing. Serves 12*

#### FOR THE CAKE

- 4 oz. (½ cup) unsalted butter, softened; more for the pan
- 9 oz. (2 cups) unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- ¼ tsp. table salt
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 3 large eggs
- 1½ cups plain yogurt (low-fat or full-fat)
- 2 tsp. pure vanilla extract

#### FOR THE GANACHE FROSTING

- ¾ cup heavy cream
- 8 oz. semisweet chocolate, broken into small pieces
- 1 Tbs. light corn syrup

#### MAKE THE CAKE

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 350°F. Butter a 9-inch cake

pan. Line the pan with a piece of parchment paper cut to size.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. In a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment or in a large bowl with an electric hand mixer, cream the sugar and butter on medium speed until smooth and fluffy. Reduce the speed to low, add the eggs, and then add the yogurt and vanilla, scraping down the sides of the bowl as needed. Add the dry ingredients and mix until just incorporated.

Transfer the batter to the prepared pan and bake until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean, about 45 minutes. Let cool completely on a rack before turning the cake out of the pan.

#### MAKE THE FROSTING

Bring the cream to a simmer in a small saucepan over medium heat. Reduce the heat to low, add the chocolate and corn syrup, and whisk until the chocolate is completely

melted. Remove from the heat and let cool for 15 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl and refrigerate uncovered, stirring every 30 minutes or so, until it firms to a spreadable texture, about 45 minutes.

#### TO SERVE

Transfer the cake to a cake plate. Frost the cake and serve right away, or refrigerate for up to 5 days in an airtight cake container (return to room temperature before serving).



### baking with yogurt

In many recipes, yogurt is a lower-fat substitution for richer ingredients like butter or oil. And like buttermilk or sour cream, yogurt not only adds tang to cakes but also helps to create a moist texture.



### 3. USE AS A FILLING

#### tomato-basil tart with yogurt custard

*Using yogurt in a custard instead of milk or cream adds a nice tang. This one tops a puttanesca-inspired filling of tomatoes, olives, capers, anchovy, and basil. Omit the anchovy paste for a vegetarian version. Serves 6*

##### FOR THE CRUST

- 4½ oz. (1 cup) unbleached all-purpose flour; more as needed**
- ¾ oz. finely grated Asiago cheese (¼ cup)**
- 1 tsp. finely chopped fresh basil**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 3 oz. (6 Tbs.) cold unsalted butter, cut into ½-inch cubes**

##### FOR THE FILLING

- 1 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil**
- 3 medium cloves garlic, finely chopped**
- ½ tsp. anchovy paste (optional)**
- ⅛ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes**
- 2½ cups grape tomatoes**
- ½ cup pitted Kalamata olives, rinsed, patted dry, and coarsely chopped**
- 1 Tbs. capers, rinsed and patted dry**
- 3 large eggs, at room temperature**
- 1¼ cups plain yogurt**
- Freshly ground black pepper**
- 1¼ oz. finely grated Asiago cheese (½ cup)**
- Thinly sliced basil, for garnish**

##### MAKE THE CRUST

Combine the flour, Asiago, basil, ¾ tsp. salt, and ¼ tsp. pepper in a food processor. Pulse a few times just to combine. Scatter in the butter and pulse until pea-size clumps form. With the food processor running, slowly add 2 Tbs. ice water through the feed tube. Start dribbling in a third tablespoon bit by bit, stopping once the dough forms a ball.

Turn the dough onto a floured surface and press into a 6-inch disk. Wrap in plastic and chill for at least 30 minutes and up to 1 day.

##### MAKE THE FILLING

In a 4-quart saucepan, warm the oil over low heat. Add the garlic, anchovy paste (if using), and red pepper flakes and cook, stirring, until fragrant and sizzling, 3 to 5 minutes. Add the tomatoes, olives, and capers. Cover and continue cooking over low heat, stirring occasionally, until most of the tomatoes have burst and the liquid has mostly evaporated, about 15 minutes. Uncover and continue to cook, stirring constantly and breaking any tomatoes that have not burst, about 1 minute. Spread on a large dinner plate or tray and cool to room temperature, stirring occasionally.

Meanwhile, whisk the eggs in a medium bowl. Add the yogurt and ¼ tsp. pepper, and whisk until smooth. Set aside.

##### ASSEMBLE AND BAKE THE TART

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 425°F.

On a lightly floured surface, roll the dough into a 12-inch round. Press into a 9-inch fluted tart pan with a removable bottom, folding in any overhang to create double-thick sides. Set the tart pan on a foil-lined baking sheet.

Sprinkle ¼ cup of the Asiago over the bottom of the tart. Spread the tomato mixture on top of the cheese. Slowly pour in the egg mixture.

Bake for 20 minutes. Sprinkle the remaining 2 Tbs. Asiago on top of the tart and return to the oven until golden, puffed, and set, 15 to 20 minutes longer. Transfer the tart to a wire rack (without the baking sheet), and cool 10 minutes before removing the outer ring of the tart pan. If transferring from the metal base onto a serving plate, cool 5 to 10 minutes longer before sliding a long spatula underneath the tart to ease it off the base. Garnish with the basil. Serve warm or at room temperature.





## 4. WHIP UP A DIP

### cucumber-yogurt dip (tzatziki)

Aside from being a great party dip, tzatziki is also delicious served with roasted or grilled meats. Chopping the garlic in the salt is a Greek trick that brings out garlic's punch. Raw garlic, however, becomes acrid rather quickly, so to be at its best, tzatziki should be made the day of serving or no more than 24 hours ahead. **Yields about 2 cups; serves 8 to 10**

**Kosher or sea salt**

**2 medium cloves garlic**

**1½ cups plain whole-milk yogurt, preferably Greek**

**¾ cup peeled, seeded, and finely chopped cucumber**

**1 Tbs. red-wine vinegar**

**2 tsp. chopped fresh mint**

**2 tsp. chopped fresh dill**

**2 tsp. extra-virgin olive oil**

**Fresh mint leaves for garnish (optional)**

Spread ¾ tsp. salt on a cutting board. Peel the garlic and finely chop it on top of the salt. Transfer the garlic and salt to a medium bowl and stir in the yogurt.

Put the cucumber in a colander and squeeze as much liquid out of it as you can. Add the cucumber, vinegar, mint, dill, and olive oil to the yogurt mixture. Stir to blend and season to taste with salt. Cover and chill for at least 4 hours before serving. Serve cool, garnished with the mint leaves (if using) and accompanied by fresh pita wedges or toasted pita chips.

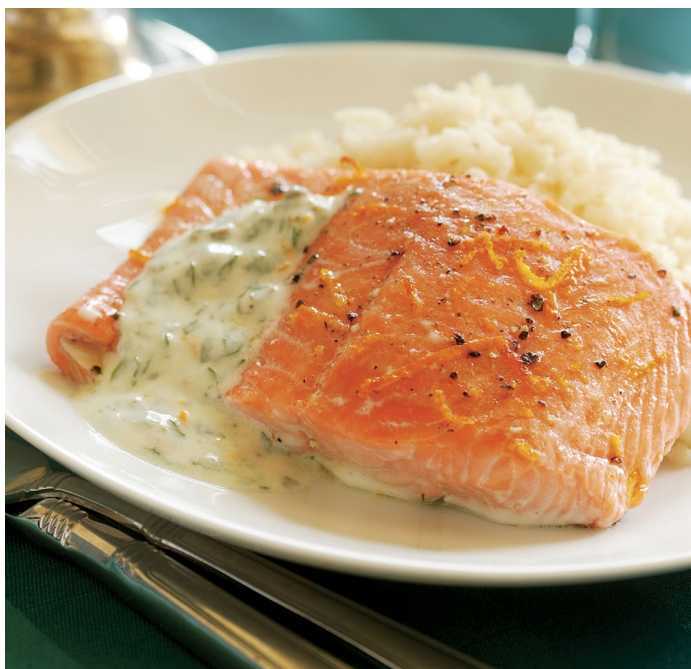


#### MAKE AHEAD

The dip can be made up to a day ahead.







## 5. SERVE AS A SAUCE

### orange-roasted salmon with yogurt-caper sauce

*Citrus zest enlivens both the fish and the herbed yogurt sauce served alongside. Serves 6*

- 2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil; more for the baking sheet**
- 6 1-inch-thick, skin-on center-cut salmon fillets (about 6 oz. each), pin bones removed**
- 1½ tsp. finely grated orange zest**
- ¾ tsp. kosher salt; more to taste**
- Freshly ground black pepper**
- ¾ cup plain whole-milk yogurt**
- 2 Tbs. finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley**
- 1½ Tbs. capers, drained, rinsed, and chopped**
- 1 Tbs. fresh orange juice**

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 400°F. Lightly oil a heavy-duty rimmed baking sheet.

Arrange the salmon skin side down on the baking sheet, drizzle with 1 Tbs. of the olive oil, and

sprinkle with 1 tsp. of the orange zest, the salt, and a few grinds of black pepper. Gently rub the seasonings into the fish. Let sit at room temperature while the oven heats.

Combine the yogurt in a small bowl with the remaining 1 Tbs. of olive oil, ½ tsp. orange zest, and the parsley, capers, and orange juice. Stir to combine. Season to taste with salt and black pepper. The sauce can be made up to several hours ahead and kept refrigerated.

Roast the salmon until just cooked through, with a trace of bright pink in the center (cut into a piece to check), 10 to 15 minutes. Serve immediately, drizzled with the yogurt sauce.



## 6. MAKE A MARINADE

### yogurt-marinated roast chicken

*Yogurt is mildly acidic, so it's a great tenderizer. Marinate chicken in it overnight for moist and flavorful meat. Serves 4*

- 1 4-lb. chicken**
- 2 cups plain full-fat or low-fat yogurt**
- 3 medium cloves garlic, chopped**
- 1 large shallot, chopped**
- ⅓ cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley**
- ¼ cup chopped fresh dill**
- 1 Tbs. cracked black peppercorns**
- 1 tsp. finely grated lemon zest**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**

Put the chicken on a cutting board breast side down. Use poultry shears to cut along both sides of the backbone; remove and discard the backbone. Flip the chicken over and press down gently to break the breastbone and flatten the breast slightly.

In a gallon-size resealable plastic bag, combine the yogurt, garlic, shallot, parsley, dill, cracked peppercorns, lemon zest, and 2 tsp. salt. Add the chicken to the bag and turn to coat well. Set in a bowl and refrigerate overnight.

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 450°F. Remove the chicken from the marinade and put it skin side up on a broiler pan or on a rack set inside a rimmed baking sheet. Season both sides well with salt and pepper. Roast the chicken, uncovered, until an instant-read thermometer inserted in the thigh reads 170°F, 45 to 50 minutes. Transfer the chicken to a carving board and loosely tent it with foil; let rest for 10 minutes before carving.





## 7. FREEZE A SWEET TREAT

### creamy orange-vanilla ice pops

Think of these pops as the ultimate homemade Creamsicle: creamy Greek yogurt combines with fresh-squeezed orange juice, with flecks of real vanilla bean. **Yields about ten ½-cup pops**

- ½ cup granulated sugar
- Pinch of kosher salt
- ½ vanilla bean (about 3 inches), split lengthwise
- 3 oranges, juiced
- 1 cup plain Greek-style yogurt

Combine the sugar, salt, and ½ cup water in a 2-quart saucepan over medium heat. Bring to a boil and make sure the sugar has dissolved; add the vanilla bean. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer for 2 minutes. Remove from the heat and let the syrup cool completely. Strain through a fine strainer into a 1-quart liquid measuring cup, and discard the solids in the strainer.

Measure out 1 cup of the orange juice (if you have extra, save it for another use). Combine it with the syrup. Stir in the yogurt until well combined.

Add the fruit mixture to each mold, leaving about ¼ inch at the top to allow for expansion. Freeze until partially frozen, about 1 hour. Insert sticks and freeze again until the pops are fully set, 4 to 6 hours more.

To unmold, dip the mold in a deep pan of hot water until the pops pull out easily, 30 to 40 seconds, or let sit at room temperature for 5 to 10 minutes. Unmold and store the pops in individual resealable plastic bags; they're best eaten within 3 weeks.







## 8. ADD TO BATTER

### spiced yogurt waffles with toasted-pecan maple syrup

*Yogurt gives waffles a rich texture and a slightly tangy flavor, which is complemented here by warm spices. Whipped egg whites folded into the batter ensure light, tender results.*

**Yields about 10 waffles**

- 9 oz. (2 cups) unbleached all-purpose flour**
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup granulated sugar**
- 2 tsp. ground cinnamon**
- $1\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. baking powder**
- 1 tsp. baking soda**
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. kosher salt**
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. ground nutmeg**
- $\frac{1}{8}$  tsp. ground cloves**
- $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups plain full-fat or low-fat yogurt**
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup whole milk**
- 2 large eggs, separated**
- 3 Tbs. vegetable oil; more for the waffle iron**
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. pure vanilla extract**
- 1 cup pure maple syrup**
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup toasted pecans, coarsely chopped**

Heat the oven to 200°F and heat a waffle iron, preferably a Belgian waffle iron.

In a small bowl, combine the flour, sugar, cinnamon, baking powder, baking soda, salt, nutmeg, and cloves. In a large bowl, combine the yogurt, milk, egg yolks, vegetable oil, and vanilla.

In a medium bowl, with a wire whisk or electric hand mixer, beat the egg whites to soft peaks.

With a spatula, gently fold the dry ingredients into the yogurt mixture until just combined (the batter should be a little lumpy). Fold the whipped egg whites into the batter until just incorporated.

Brush the waffle iron with a little vegetable oil. Working in batches, cook the batter in the waffle iron according to the manufacturer's instructions until crisp and golden. Set the waffles directly on the oven rack to keep warm. Do not stack them.

Meanwhile, in a 2-quart saucepan, warm the maple syrup over medium heat. Stir in the pecans and keep warm. Serve the waffles with the syrup.







## 9. STIR INTO SOUP

### spiced lentil soup with herbed yogurt

*Warm spices and earthy legumes are topped with a cooling yogurt. To learn more about lentils, see Test Kitchen, p. 88. Serves 4 to 6; yields about 6 cups*

- 4 oz. bacon (about 4 slices), cut into thin strips**
- 2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil**
- 1 large leek (white and light green parts), cut in half, rinsed of grit, and finely diced**
- 2 medium carrots, peeled and finely diced**
- 1 rib celery, finely diced**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 2 tsp. ground cumin**
- 1 tsp. ground coriander**
- 1½ cups dried French green lentils (or brown lentils), sorted through and rinsed**
- 6 Tbs. chopped fresh cilantro**
- 1 cup plain yogurt**
- 2 Tbs. chopped fresh mint**

Cook the bacon in the oil in a large saucepan or pot over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until it's brown and crisp, about 8 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the bacon to a plate lined with paper towels. Add the leek, carrots, and celery to the pan, season with salt and pepper, and cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables soften and just start to brown, about 7 minutes. Stir in the cumin and coriander and cook for 30 seconds. Stir in the lentils and 5 cups water and season with salt and pepper. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to a gentle simmer, cover, and cook until the lentils become tender but not mushy, about 45 minutes. Stir in ¼ cup of the cilantro and the reserved bacon. Thin with water, if necessary, to get the consistency you like. Taste for salt and pepper.

In a small bowl, mix the yogurt with the remaining 2 Tbs. cilantro and the mint and season with salt. Ladle the soup into serving bowls, top with a dollop of the yogurt, and serve immediately.







## 10. DRESS A SALAD

### cucumber, fennel, and roasted potato salad with parsleyed yogurt

*This refreshing, almost palate-cleansing side dish is served with cool, creamy yogurt. It pairs perfectly with lamb. Serves 6 to 8*

- 1½ lb. fingerling potatoes**
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil; more to taste**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- ½ lb. haricots verts or slender green beans, trimmed**
- 1½ cups plain whole-milk Greek yogurt**
- 1½ Tbs. chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley**
- 3 medium stalks celery, trimmed and sliced ½ inch thick on a sharp diagonal**
- 1 English cucumber, peeled, cut in half lengthwise, seeded, and sliced ½ inch thick on the diagonal**
- 1 medium bulb fennel (about 1 lb.), trimmed, cut in half, cored, and sliced crosswise ½ inch thick**
- 1 small red onion, halved and sliced crosswise ½ inch thick**
- 1 Tbs. fresh lemon juice; more to taste**

Heat the oven to 400°F. On a small rimmed baking sheet, toss the potatoes with 1 Tbs. of the oil and season generously with salt and pepper. Roast until tender when pierced with a skewer, 25 to 30 minutes. Cool the potatoes; they can be served still warm or at room temperature.

Meanwhile, bring a medium saucepan of salted water to a boil. Cook the haricots verts until just tender (taste one to see), 3 to 4 minutes. Drain in a colander and run under cold water until cool.

Combine the yogurt and parsley and season well with salt and pepper; keep chilled until ready to serve.

To serve, halve or quarter any larger fingerlings, but leave the tiny ones whole. Combine the potatoes, haricots verts, celery, cucumber, fennel, and red onion in a large bowl and toss with the remaining 3 Tbs. oil

and the lemon juice. Season well with salt and pepper and toss again. Taste and add more lemon juice or olive oil if needed.

Divide the salad among six to eight plates, piling it toward the center of each plate. Drop a large dollop of yogurt next to each salad.



#### MAKE AHEAD

You can prepare both the yogurt and the vegetables a few hours ahead of serving. Stir together the yogurt, parsley, and seasonings and refrigerate, covered. Combine all the vegetables but the potatoes in a bowl but don't dress them. Cover the vegetables with a damp paper towel and keep refrigerated; leave the potatoes at room temperature.





# Rhubarb's GREATEST HITS

Brighten up your favorite desserts  
with sweet-tart rhubarb.

Rosy red in color with a unique sweet-tart flavor, rhubarb can give a wonderful seasonal spark to just about any dessert. When the very first stalks of rhubarb show up at the market in early spring, use it in classic desserts that everyone loves, from pies to crumbles, muffins, and compotes.

Although it's usually treated as a fruit and used mainly in desserts, rhubarb is technically a vegetable. The edible parts are the fleshy celery-like stalks. If you grow your own, be aware that the green leaves are poisonous if eaten and need to be removed.

When shopping for rhubarb, look for firm, crisp, unblemished stalks with a bright, intense color. Look for thinner stalks, as larger ones tend to be more stringy and tough. Wrap the stalks tightly in plastic and refrigerate them. They should stay crisp for up to five days.

You can also freeze sliced or diced rhubarb in plastic bags for up to six months. Frozen rhubarb tends to release more liquid and doesn't hold its shape as well as fresh rhubarb, so use it where texture is not essential, as in the muffins on p. 65.

To prep rhubarb for cooking, trim off the ends and any leaves still attached. Peel the fibrous exterior only if it's very tough. Cut rhubarb as you would celery, into slices or small dice, depending on the recipe.

The simplest way to cook rhubarb is to simmer it in a little liquid with sugar and other flavorings, as you will in the compote at right. You can also bake with rhubarb by adding it to cake or muffin batters, just as you would blueberries and other fruits.

In sweet preparations, rhubarb needs a good amount of sugar to balance its tartness. Cooking helps offset its natural astringency

but also causes it to release a surprising amount of liquid. In compotes or sauces, where a juicy consistency is desirable, this is a boon. But if you're making a filling for a pie or crumble, you need to add a thickener, such as cornstarch or tapioca, to prevent it from being too loose.

Some of the best rhubarb desserts are simple and revolve around everyday pantry ingredients, and the recipes here are perfect examples. Make a Strawberry-Rhubarb Pie that's as easy as pie gets and all comfort. Sour cream adds richness to the Cinnamon Rhubarb Muffins, but it's the juice released by the rhubarb that makes them so tender and moist that you can still serve them the next day. A generous amount of oatmeal streusel tops the Rhubarb Brown Sugar Crumble, providing a crunchy contrast to the tart, juicy filling. And the Strawberry-Rhubarb Compote comes together in a heartbeat and is extremely versatile. Spoon it over buttermilk cheesecake, ice cream, or a silky panna cotta. To tell you the truth, it even makes a delicious spread for a cold pork loin sandwich.

## grow your own

To have your own supply of rhubarb, plant roots in early spring; seeds take much longer to become established. It's best to wait until the second year after planting to harvest, as the stalks usually aren't thick and robust enough the first year. Rhubarb is a forgiving plant that can withstand a considerable amount of neglect. In fact, you might want to plant it in a spot where you won't mind seeing it every year, as it will come back again and again.



## strawberry- rhubarb compote with vanilla and cardamom

*Cardamom gives this compote an alluring flavor. It's excellent spooned over ice cream, cheesecake, or panna cotta, and even as a spread for a pork sandwich. It will keep, covered and refrigerated, for up to 4 days. Yields about 4½ cups*

- 4 cups ½-inch-thick sliced rhubarb (about 1½ lb.)**
- ½ cup granulated sugar; more to taste**
- 6 Tbs. fresh orange juice; more to taste**
- 3 Tbs. honey**
- ¼ tsp. plus ½ tsp. ground cardamom**
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt**
- 1 small vanilla bean**
- 3 cups hulled and thickly sliced strawberries (about 2 pints)**

Combine the rhubarb, sugar, orange juice, honey, all the cardamom, and salt in a heavy-bottomed stainless steel 3-quart saucepan. With a paring knife, slit open the vanilla bean lengthwise, scrape out the seeds with the back of the knife, and add the seeds and the scraped pod to the saucepan.

Bring to a simmer over medium-low heat, stirring often. Simmer until the rhubarb releases its juice and becomes tender but still retains its

shape, 5 to 6 minutes. Add the strawberries and simmer until they start to soften and the rhubarb breaks down slightly, 1 to 3 minutes.

Pour the mixture into a bowl. Make an ice bath by filling a larger bowl with ice and water. Chill the compote over the ice bath at room temperature, stirring occasionally, until completely cool, 10 to 15 minutes. Discard the vanilla pod. Taste the compote and add more sugar and orange juice, if needed.





# strawberry-rhubarb pie

Don't worry if the crust cracks slightly during baking; it only adds to the homemade look of the pie. **Serves 8**

## FOR THE CRUST

- 12 oz. (2 ¾ cups) unbleached all-purpose flour; more for rolling
- 2½ tsp. granulated sugar
- ¾ tsp. kosher salt
- 4 oz. (8 Tbs.) cold unsalted butter, cut into small pieces
- 4 oz. (½ cup plus 1 Tbs.) cold vegetable shortening, cut into small pieces

## FOR THE FILLING

- 4 cups ½-inch-thick sliced rhubarb (about 1½ lb.)
- 1 lb. strawberries, hulled and sliced ½ inch thick (about 2½ cups)
- 1½ cups plus 2 Tbs. granulated sugar
- ¼ cup plus 1½ Tbs. quick-cooking tapioca
- 2 Tbs. fresh orange juice
- 1 tsp. finely grated orange zest
- ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp. ground clove
- ¼ tsp. ground allspice
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt

- 2 Tbs. cold butter, cut into small pieces

## FOR THE GLAZE

- 1 large egg yolk

## MAKE THE CRUST

In a food processor, combine the flour, sugar, and salt, and pulse to combine. Add the butter and shortening and pulse until the mixture resembles coarse meal, about 1 minute. Transfer the mixture to a large bowl.

Fill a measuring cup with ½ cup very cold water. While tossing and stirring the flour mixture with a fork, add the water 1 Tbs. at a time until the dough just begins to come together in small clumps and holds together when you pinch a little between your fingers (you may need only ¼ cup of water).

Transfer the dough to a clean work surface and gather it together with your hands. Lightly knead the dough once or twice, divide it in half, and shape the

halves into disks. Wrap the disks separately in plastic and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to 2 days.

## PREPARE THE FILLING

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 375°F. In a large mixing bowl, combine the rhubarb, strawberries, sugar, tapioca, orange juice, zest, cinnamon, clove, allspice, and salt. Toss gently to mix well, and then let sit for at least 10 minutes and up to 30 minutes (while you roll out the bottom crust).

## ASSEMBLE THE PIE

If the dough was refrigerated for several hours or overnight, let it sit at room temperature until pliable, about 20 minutes. On a lightly floured surface, roll out one of the dough disks into a ½-inch-thick circle, 12 to 13 inches in diameter, and transfer it to a 9-inch Pyrex pie plate. Pour the

filling into the pie shell and dot the top with the cold butter. In a small bowl, beat the egg yolk with 1 tsp. water. Brush the edges of the pie shell with some of the egg glaze.

Roll out the second dough disk as above and set it over the fruit filling to form a top crust. Press the edges of the dough together to seal the crust, trim the overhang to ½ inch, and fold it under. Flute or crimp the dough all around. Brush the top crust with the remaining egg glaze (you won't need all of it). Cut four 1- to 1½-inch-long steam vents in the top crust.

Set the pie on a foil-lined rimmed baking sheet and bake until the pastry is golden brown and the fruit juices bubble thickly out of the pie, 70 to 80 minutes. Transfer to a rack and let cool completely before serving, about 4 hours.



## what pairs well with rhubarb?

Spring strawberries and rhubarb are a classic combination, but other sweet fruits such as peaches, apples, and pears make wonderful partners, too. Accent flavors like vanilla, caramel, cinnamon, ginger, orange juice, and orange zest as well as brown sugar make a nice complement, showing off rhubarb's bright personality. Nuts provide great textural contrast.





## rhubarb brown sugar crumble

Vanilla ice cream is a natural with this homey favorite. **Serves 6 to 8**

- 1 Tbs. unsalted butter, softened at room temperature

### FOR THE TOPPING

- 4½ oz. (1 cup) all-purpose flour
- 1 cup lightly packed light brown sugar
- ½ cup old-fashioned oats
- ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt
- 4 oz. (8 Tbs.) cold unsalted butter, cut into small pieces

### FOR THE FILLING

- 7 cups ½-inch-thick sliced rhubarb (about 2 lb.)
- 1 cup lightly packed light brown sugar
- ¼ cup cornstarch
- 1 Tbs. fresh lemon juice
- 2 tsp. finely grated lemon zest (from 1 medium lemon, using a rasp-style grater)
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 350°F. Grease an 8x8-inch Pyrex baking dish with the softened butter.

### MAKE THE TOPPING

In a food processor, combine the flour, brown sugar, oats, cinnamon, and salt and pulse several times to combine. Add the cold butter and pulse until the mixture has the texture of coarse meal and clumps together when squeezed lightly, about 1 minute.

### MAKE THE FILLING

Combine the rhubarb, brown sugar, cornstarch, lemon juice, lemon zest, and salt in a large bowl and stir with a spatula until evenly mixed. Transfer the rhubarb mixture to the baking pan, and sprinkle the topping evenly over the fruit; the pan will be very full, but the crumble will settle as it bakes.

Bake until the topping is lightly browned, the rhubarb is tender (probe in the center with a skewer to check), and the juices are bubbling thickly around the edges, 45 to 60 minutes. Transfer to a rack to cool to warm or room temperature and to allow the juices to thicken, at least 1 hour.



## cinnamon-rhubarb muffins

These muffins are best when freshly baked, but they're still good the second day. Just reheat them in a 350°F oven for 3 to 4 minutes to refresh them. **Yields 12 medium muffins**

### FOR THE MUFFINS

- 9 oz. (2 cups) all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup granulated sugar
- 2½ tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp. baking soda
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- 1 cup sour cream
- 4 oz. (8 Tbs.) unsalted butter, melted and cooled slightly
- 2 large eggs
- 1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- 1½ cups ¼-inch-diced rhubarb (7½ oz.)

### FOR THE TOPPING

- 3 Tbs. granulated sugar
- ½ tsp. ground cinnamon

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 400°F. Line a 12-cup muffin tin with paper or foil baking cups.

### MAKE THE MUFFIN BATTER

In a large mixing bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder, cinnamon, baking soda, and salt and whisk to blend.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the sour cream, melted butter, eggs, and vanilla until smooth. Lightly stir the sour

cream mixture into the dry ingredients with a spatula until the batter just comes together; do not overmix. Gently stir in the diced rhubarb. The batter will be thick.

Divide the batter among the muffin cups, using the back of a spoon or a small spatula to settle the batter into the cups. The batter should mound a bit higher than the tops of the cups.

### MAKE THE TOPPING

In a small bowl, combine the sugar and cinnamon and mix well. Sprinkle a generous ½ tsp. of the cinnamon-sugar mixture over each muffin.

Bake the muffins until they're golden brown, spring back most of the way when gently pressed, and a pick inserted in the center comes out clean, 18 to 22 minutes. Transfer to a rack and let the muffins cool in the pan for 5 to 10 minutes. Carefully lift the muffins out of the pan—if necessary, loosen them with the tip of a paring knife—and let them cool somewhat. Serve warm.







# ONE SIMPLE METHOD, Four Delicious Pasta Dinners

Learn how to make light, creamy pasta sauce.

PASTA WITH CREAM SAUCE is a perfect example of how easy—and how liberating—it is to cook without a recipe. Once you learn the steps here, you can improvise a tasty pasta dinner in minutes. The secret to a light, creamy sauce? No matter what ingredients you use, you just need to know how to control the depth and balance of flavors and the consistency of the sauce. This four-step method will give you that control, whether you're using

one of the recipe ideas included here, making an Italian classic, or cooking your own eclectic combination.

Here's how easy it is to make these dishes: Get your ingredients ready, including boiling your pasta; sauté the main ingredients for the dish; add the flavoring and stock; add the cream; and then toss everything together.

**Keep in mind that cream is not a dirty word.** It's not bad when it's used judiciously; in fact it's lovely and deli-





## Flavorful sauce combinations

To make a cream pasta, follow the steps on pp. 70–71, using any of the ingredient lists below or on pp. 68–69. Be sure to do all your prep first, including cooking your pasta. All these recipes serve two to three.

### ziti with mushrooms, pancetta, and peas

#### SAUTÉ

- 2 Tbs. olive oil
- ¼ cup finely chopped pancetta
- ¼ cup finely minced onion
- 2 cups thinly sliced cremini mushrooms (from about 8 oz. mushrooms)
- ½ cup thawed frozen peas (add these last)

#### FLAVOR

- 1 tsp. chopped fresh thyme (or ½ tsp. dried)
- ¼ cup Madeira or Marsala
- ½ cup homemade or lower-salt canned chicken or vegetable broth

#### ENRICH

- ½ to ¾ cup heavy cream

#### TOSS

- 8 oz. dried ziti, cooked and drained
- ¼ cup freshly grated Parmesan



cious. And you really don't need as much as you might think. Truth is, the cream is not the star in the sauce method here; it's the sautéed meat or vegetables and the pasta. In this method, almost half of the volume in the sauces comes from other liquids, like broth, fortified wines, or the juice from canned tomatoes. This gives the sauce tons of flavor without fat. The ½ to ¾ cup cream primarily serves as an enrichment to the sauce.

**Get the pasta (and everything else) ready—this sauce moves fast.** Always start a cream sauce by boiling the water for the pasta. Cream sauces are so fast that there's no time to make the sauce and the pasta at the same time; the sauce will be done long before the water even comes to a boil. Be sure the pasta's not too tough, not too mushy. It should have some resistance, some chew, a firm bite. When the pasta is done, drain it immediately and rinse it to keep it from sticking.







## spaghetti with shrimp in curry cream sauce

### SAUTÉ

- 2 Tbs. olive oil or vegetable oil
- 1 Tbs. minced fresh ginger
- $\frac{3}{4}$  lb. small or medium shrimp, peeled and deveined
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup snow peas, cut across into squares

### FLAVOR

- 1 Tbs. curry powder
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup dry vermouth
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup homemade or lower-salt canned vegetable or chicken broth

### ENRICH

- $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup heavy cream

### TOSS

- 8 oz. dried thin spaghetti, cooked and drained
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 thinly sliced scallions







## penne with tomato vodka cream sauce

### SAUTÉ

- 2 Tbs. olive oil
- 1 small yellow onion, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 cups canned crushed tomatoes

### FLAVOR

- 1 tsp. chopped fresh thyme (or ½ tsp. dried)
- 2 tsp. chopped fresh oregano (or ½ tsp. dried)
- ¼ tsp. dried red chile flakes
- ¼ cup vodka
- ⅓ cup homemade or lower-salt canned chicken or vegetable broth

### ENRICH

- ½ to ¾ cup heavy cream

### TOSS

- 8 oz. dried penne, cooked and drained
- ¼ cup freshly grated Parmesan
- ¼ cup roughly chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley (optional)



## rigatoni normandy

### SAUTÉ

- 1½ Tbs. unsalted butter
- 1 leek (white and light green part only), sliced in half and very thinly sliced crosswise, washed, and drained
- 6 oz. boneless, skinless chicken breast, cut into thin strips
- ½ Granny Smith or Macintosh apple, peeled, cored, and thinly sliced

### FLAVOR

- 1 tsp. chopped fresh tarragon (or ½ tsp. dried)
- ¼ cup brandy or Calvados
- ⅓ cup homemade or lower-salt canned chicken broth

### ENRICH

- ½ to ¾ cup heavy cream

### TOSS

- 8 oz. dried rigatoni, cooked and drained
- ¼ cup finely shredded Gruyère or Emmental cheese





# Four quick steps to a great pasta dinner



## 1. SAUTÉ

Sauté your main ingredients lightly—they'll cook more in the sauce. Every good cream sauce begins not with cream but with a sautéed main ingredient or two: the base of the dish. Any meat, poultry, or seafood needs to be browned lightly during this first step, but not totally cooked because it will continue to cook as you reduce the liquids. Root vegetables are particularly good with cream sauces, but they need to be cut very small or even shredded first since they have long cooking times. How long you sauté each ingredient is all a matter of common sense but with this caveat: The main ingredient should be slightly undercooked at this point because it's going to continue cooking with the flavorings and the cream. And be sure to lightly season your ingredients at this stage with salt and pepper so that the flavors have a chance to penetrate. When you start to sauté, get the pan nice and hot and use just a small amount of oil or butter. If you add too much fat to the dish, it can force the cream to break. But by keeping the butter or oil content low in the first place, you'll actually have a richer, thicker sauce.

## 2. FLAVOR

Add flavor by reducing liquids into a savory layer. The base has been sautéed, but it's not yet time for the cream. The next step is what makes the sauces so delicious yet less rich than many. Add and reduce liquids to lay down a layer of deep flavor for the dish and provide some of the volume of the sauce. Add spices and herbs right before the liquids, taking care to only gently toast the spices without burning them. As for the liquid, begin with any wine or spirits that you might be using so that the alcohol has a chance to evaporate and the sugars can caramelize a bit. But remember that if your pan is very hot, liquors may flame; take the pan off the heat source momentarily before adding them and stand back. If it does ignite, keep your cool and cover the pan to extinguish the flame. For the rest of the liquid, you can use fish stock, clam juice, or chicken, vegetable, or beef broth, depending on the main ingredient. Use a total of about  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup liquid for two main-course servings. The idea is not to boil the ingredients in the liquid but rather to reduce the liquid slightly to let the flavors form a background with the main ingredient.





## cook pasta and prep for the sauce

The four-step sauce will cook quickly. Cooking the pasta and prepping all of the ingredients first will be a key to success. When the pasta is al dente, rinse it briefly to keep it from clumping. The pasta will be heated again in the sauce, so don't worry about keeping it warm. Then follow these steps to make the pasta dish of your choice (see some suggested ingredient combinations on pp. 67–69).

## the only pasta tip you'll ever need

What's the secret to perfect pasta? Oil in the water? Butter? A little nutmeg? No, the only trick is to use enough water. For a pound of pasta, use 4 quarts of boiling water with about 2 Tbs. salt; for anything less than 1 lb., use 3 quarts water, never less, and 1½ Tbs. salt; for anything more than 1 lb., increase the water by 1 quart per ½ lb. and the salt by ½ Tbs. per quart. You need enough water so that the pasta moves around in the pot, which lets it cook evenly in the water.



## 3. ENRICH

Finally, enrich the sauce by adding cream—but not too much. The cream should reduce slightly so that the sauce has a nice coating consistency but isn't thick. This will take from just a minute up to a few minutes, depending on your pan and your stove. Keep an eye on it: Underreducing the cream will give you a soupy sauce with a raw edge to it, while overreducing it won't give you enough sauce to coat the pasta well, plus you may break the cream.

## 4. TOSS

Toss well to bring it all together. The final step to a pasta cream sauce is bringing together the cheese (though not every dish even needs cheese), the sauce, and the pasta itself. Add the cheese and the cooked pasta while the pan's still over the heat. Toss both in the pan, stirring so the pasta heats through and the sauce is completely incorporated, and then immediately remove the pan from the heat. Cheese is salty by nature, so wait until the cheese and pasta have been tossed in the sauce to do your final seasoning. If you're using any fresh herbs as a final garnish, sprinkle them on now. And serve immediately—remember, reheating is not good for cream sauces.







# Versatile COCONUT

Fresh or dried, this ingredient livens up both sweet and savory dishes.

COCONUT IS DELICIOUS in its many forms, as you'll see in the pages that follow. Of course, there's the fresh version, a nut that encases white meat and pale white juice. But you'll also find shredded and sweetened coconut (moist and tasty in desserts and baked goods), shredded and unsweetened (perfect for savory dishes), and flaked (similar to shredded but available in wider, flatter

pieces; it makes a perfect garnish, thanks to its crunchy texture). And then there's coconut milk, a thick, creamy liquid made from combining coconut meat with hot water, milk, or cream, and straining and squeezing out as much liquid as possible. It adds a wonderfully rich texture and flavor to everything from hearty soups to delicate desserts.



## dried cherry and coconut granola

*Wake up to a fresh batch of cardamom-scented granola, which becomes crisp overnight in the cooling oven. It's delicious with almonds, pistachios, and dried cherries, but you can use any nuts and dried fruit you like. Serve with yogurt or milk. Yields 10 to 11 cups*

- 4 cups old-fashioned rolled oats
- 1½ cups slivered almonds
- 1 cup shelled, unsalted pistachios
- 1 cup unsweetened coconut chips or unsweetened shredded coconut
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp. table salt
- ½ tsp. ground cardamom
- ¾ cup pure maple syrup
- ½ cup olive oil
- ¼ cup packed dark brown sugar
- ¾ cup dried cherries, preferably unsweetened

### THE NIGHT BEFORE

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 350°F. Line a large heavy-duty rimmed baking sheet with parchment.

Combine the oats, almonds, pistachios, coconut, cinnamon, salt, and cardamom in a large bowl. Add the maple syrup, oil, and brown sugar and stir well. Spread onto the prepared sheet and bake until just starting to turn golden, about 15 minutes. Turn off the oven. Stir the granola mixture, return to the oven, and close the door. Let the granola sit in the oven for 6 to 12 hours.

### IN THE MORNING

Transfer the granola to a large bowl, breaking up any large clumps. Stir in the dried cherries and serve. (Store leftovers in an airtight container for up to 1 month.)





## coconut macaroons

*These macaroons have a soft, chewy center with a slightly crisped exterior.*

*Think gently toasted marshmallow kissed by coconut. **Makes about 20 macaroons***

- 1 cup sweetened condensed milk**  
(from a 12-oz. can; there will be a little left over)
- 1 tsp. pure vanilla extract**
- 14 oz. (4½ cups) sweetened shredded coconut**
- 2 large egg whites**
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt**

Position oven racks in the top and bottom thirds of the oven and heat the oven to 350°F. Line 2 large rimmed baking sheets with parchment.

Combine the condensed milk and vanilla in a large bowl. Add the coconut and stir with a large silicone spatula until thoroughly mixed.

Beat the egg whites and salt with an electric mixer on medium speed until stiff peaks form, about 4 minutes. Using the spatula, fold the whites into the coconut mixture. Push the mixture together into a mound.

With wet hands or two wet spoons, gently form rounded tablespoonfuls of batter into balls about 1½ inches in diameter. Arrange 2 inches apart on the baking sheets.

Bake, rotating and swapping the positions of the pans halfway through, until the macaroons are golden brown in spots and their undersides are tanned, about 25 minutes.

Cool briefly on the baking sheets on racks, then transfer the macaroons directly to the racks to cool completely. The macaroons will keep, uncovered at room temperature, for up to 3 days, or refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 3 weeks. They can also be frozen for up to 6 months.





## make and shape the batter



Combine the condensed milk and vanilla. The milk helps give macaroons their characteristic slightly sticky texture while pure vanilla extract rounds out the flavor.



Thoroughly mix in the coconut. Doing this now allows you to fold gently when adding the egg whites.



Add whipped egg whites. The airy whites lighten the dense elements. Mix gently, using a lift-and-fold motion to keep them from deflating.



Shape into balls and bake. The bottoms of the macaroons can spread a bit during baking, so leave some space between each on the baking sheets.

## curried coconut rice pilaf

*This aromatic rice, with its warm curry flavor and welcome nut crunch, transforms pot roast or beef stew into a much more exotic and memorable meal. Serves 4*

- ½ cup finely chopped onion
- 2 Tbs. olive oil
- 1 cup long-grain white rice
- 1½ tsp. curry powder
- 1¼ cups "lite" coconut milk
- ¾ cup homemade or lower-salt chicken broth
- 2 Tbs. currants
- ½ tsp. kosher salt; more to taste
- ¼ cup sliced almonds, lightly toasted in a dry skillet
- 2 Tbs. chopped fresh cilantro
- Freshly ground black pepper

In a heavy-based 2- or 3-quart saucepan over medium heat, sweat the onion in the olive oil until softened but not browned. Add the rice and the curry powder and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Add the coconut milk, chicken broth, currants, and salt. Boil uncovered over high heat until the level of the liquid is just above the level of the rice and you can see air holes forming in the rice, 5 to 7 minutes. Cover immediately, reduce the heat to low, and simmer (or bake in a 350°F oven) for exactly 15 minutes without lifting the lid. Let the pilaf rest off the heat for at least 5 minutes (and up to 20 minutes). Don't uncover until after the first 5 minutes of resting. Fluff and separate the rice grains with a fork, folding in the toasted almonds and the fresh cilantro. (Don't stir vigorously or the rice may get gummy.) Taste and add salt and pepper as needed.





## chocolate, coconut, and almond bread

*Inspired by a favorite coconut candy bar, the Almond Joy, this desserty quick bread is a joy to bake and eat.*

**Yields one loaf; serves 10**

- 1 Tbs. unsalted butter, softened**
- 9 oz. (2 cups) unbleached all-purpose flour, plus more for the pan**
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup granulated sugar**
- 1 Tbs. baking powder**
- $\frac{3}{4}$  tsp. table salt**
- 1 cup chocolate chips**
- $1\frac{1}{4}$  cups shredded sweetened dried coconut**
- 1 cup coconut milk**
- 2 large eggs, at room temperature**
- 1 tsp. pure vanilla extract**
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. pure almond extract**
- 4 oz. ( $\frac{1}{2}$  cup) unsalted butter, melted and cooled**
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sliced or chopped almonds**

Position a rack in the lower third of the oven and heat the oven to 350°F. Butter and then flour the bottom and sides of a 6-cup ( $8\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{1}{2}$ -inch or 9x5-inch) loaf pan, tapping out any excess flour.

In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt. Whisk until well blended. Stir in the chocolate chips and coconut.

In a medium bowl, combine the coconut milk, eggs, vanilla, and almond extract. Whisk until blended. Pour the wet ingredients over the dry ingredients. Add the melted butter. Using a silicone spatula, gently fold until blended.

Scrape the batter into the prepared pan and spread evenly.

Sprinkle the almonds evenly over the batter, gently patting them in so they adhere.

Bake, rotating halfway through, until the top is golden and a wooden skewer or toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, 50 to 55 minutes. Let cool in the pan on a rack for 30 minutes. Invert the bread and remove the pan, turn the bread right side up, and let cool completely. Store, covered, at room temperature for up to 2 days.





# beer-battered coconut shrimp with rémoulade sauce

*A shot of hot sauce in the batter counters the sweetness of the shrimp, which get a double dose of crunch from a coating of shredded coconut and panko. Serves 4 as an appetizer*

## FOR THE RÉMOULADE SAUCE

- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 2 Tbs. finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 2 Tbs. minced celery
- 2 Tbs. minced shallot
- 1 Tbs. finely chopped capers
- 1 Tbs. whole-grain mustard
- 1 small orange, finely grated to yield 1 tsp. zest, squeezed to yield 1½ tsp. juice
- 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste

## FOR THE SHRIMP

- About 4½ cups peanut or canola oil
- 2¼ oz. (½ cup) all-purpose flour
- 1 Tbs. granulated sugar
- 1 Tbs. Cajun seasoning
- Kosher salt
- ½ cup pale lager beer, such as Corona
- 2 Tbs. Frank's RedHot Original cayenne pepper sauce or other hot sauce
- ½ cup panko
- ½ cup unsweetened shredded coconut
- 12 colossal (13 to 15 per lb.) shrimp, peeled and deveined, tails intact

## MAKE THE RÉMOULADE SAUCE

In a small bowl, combine all of the sauce ingredients and set aside.

## COAT AND FRY THE SHRIMP

Clip a deep fat/ candy thermometer to the side of a 12-inch cast-iron skillet and add enough oil to measure ¾ inch deep. Heat to 360°F over medium heat.

Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, Cajun seasoning, and ½ tsp. salt, then slowly whisk in the beer and hot sauce to make a smooth batter. In a shallow bowl, combine the panko and shredded coconut.

Holding a shrimp by its tail, dip it into the batter, letting any excess drip off, then dredge it in the panko mixture, pressing and rolling it several times to coat well. Transfer to a plate. Repeat with the remaining shrimp.

Fry the shrimp in the hot oil, turning once with tongs, until golden brown, about

2 minutes. If necessary, adjust the heat to maintain the oil at 360°F. Transfer the shrimp with a slotted spoon to a plate lined with paper towels to drain briefly.

Serve the shrimp with the rémoulade sauce.









## lentils with indian spices and coconut

*Be sure to use the garnishes—they add color, brightness, and texture to this comforting South Indian-inspired vegan entrée. You can purchase pomegranate arils (seeds) already removed from the fruits in the produce or freezer sections at grocery stores. Serves 4 to 6*

- 3 Tbs. vegetable oil, divided
- 1 cup finely chopped red onion
- Scant 1 cup finely chopped carrot
- 3 Tbs. finely chopped scallion, white and light green parts only
- 1 Tbs. plus ½ tsp. minced peeled fresh ginger
- 2 tsp. finely chopped garlic
- 1½ tsp. garam masala (without salt)
- 3 Tbs. tomato paste
- 1 lb. dried brown lentils
- 2 cups reduced-sodium vegetable broth (not stock)
- 1½ tsp. coarse salt
- 1 13½-oz. can light coconut milk, shaken
- 2 Tbs. tamarind concentrate
- 4 to 6 cups cooked rice or rice pilaf, for serving

Fresh pomegranate arils (seeds), for serving

Lightly toasted unsweetened coconut, for serving

Chopped fresh cilantro leaves, for serving

Lime wedges, for serving

Plain soy yogurt, for serving (optional)

Heat 2 Tbs. of the oil in a large, heavy Dutch oven over medium heat. When hot, add the onions, carrots, scallions, ginger, garlic, and garam masala, and sauté until the onions are soft, about 8 minutes.

Stir in the remaining 1 Tbs. oil plus the tomato paste and lentils, and cook for 2 minutes. Add the broth, 4 cups water, and the salt, and bring to a boil over high heat, stirring occasionally.

As soon as the mixture comes to a boil, cover the pot, reduce the heat to medium low, and simmer until the lentils are very tender, about another 30 minutes. Stir in the coconut milk and tamarind, re-cover, and simmer over medium-low heat for another 2 minutes (the lentils should be very tender, and the pot should include some liquid but not so much that the mixture is very soupy).

If you'd like, use a potato masher to mash the lentils a bit. Then ladle portions over rice, garnishing each serving with pomegranate seeds, toasted coconut, cilantro, lime wedges, and—if desired—soy yogurt.





## outrageous coconut-cream meringue cake

*This cake owes its stunning looks to a billowy meringue frosting that's spiked and browned all over with a kitchen torch (for more on torches, see Test Kitchen, p. 91). Serves 16*

### FOR THE CAKE

- 8 oz. (1 cup) unsalted butter, softened; more for the pans
- 13½ oz. (3 cups) unbleached all-purpose flour
- 4 tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- 1 cup unsweetened coconut milk, well shaken and at room temperature
- 1 Tbs. pure vanilla extract
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs, at room temperature
- ¾ cup sour cream, at room temperature
- 6 large egg whites, at room temperature

### FOR THE FILLING

- 2 cups heavy cream
- 3 large egg yolks
- ¾ cup granulated sugar
- 2 Tbs. unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1 cup sweetened coconut flakes, toasted
- 1 oz. (2 Tbs.) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 Tbs. pure vanilla extract
- Pinch of kosher salt

### FOR THE MERINGUE

- 3 cups granulated sugar
- 1½ cups egg whites (about 10 large), preferably pasteurized, at room temperature

### MAKE THE CAKE

Position racks in the bottom and top thirds of the oven and heat the oven to 350°F.

Butter three 9x2-inch round cake pans and line each with a parchment round. Butter the parchment.

In a medium bowl, mix the flour, baking powder, and salt. In a 1-cup liquid measure, mix the coconut milk with the vanilla.

In a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat the

butter and sugar on medium-high speed until light and fluffy, 3 to 5 minutes. Scrape down the bowl. Add the eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition.

Add about one-third of the flour mixture and mix on low speed until incorporated. Add half of the coconut milk and mix until incorporated. Continue adding the flour mixture and coconut milk, alternating the two and ending with the flour. Add the sour cream and mix until incorporated. Pour the batter into a large bowl.

In a clean mixer bowl and using the whisk attachment, beat the egg whites on high speed until soft peaks form, 2 to 3 minutes. Using a spatula, gently stir a large spoonful of the whites into the batter to loosen it, then fold the remaining egg whites gently into the batter.

Divide the cake batter evenly among the prepared cake pans.

Level the batter with a spatula. Set two pans on the top rack and the third on the lower rack. Stagger the pans on the oven racks so that no pan is directly over another. Bake, swapping and rotating the pans' positions after 15 minutes, until a toothpick inserted in the center of each cake comes out clean, 25 to 30 minutes total. Cool on racks for 10 minutes. Invert the cakes onto the racks, remove the parchment, and cool completely.

### MAKE THE FILLING

In a medium bowl, whisk 1½ cups of the cream and the egg yolks.

Combine the sugar and flour in a medium saucepan. Add the cream mixture and cook, whisking, over medium heat until smooth, 2 minutes. Bring to a simmer and cook, whisking, until thickened to a pudding consistency, 8 to 10 minutes. Remove

from the heat. Stir in the coconut, butter, vanilla, and salt and let cool to room temperature.

With an electric hand mixer, whip the remaining ½ cup cream to soft peaks. With a spatula, gently fold the whipped cream into the filling.

### ASSEMBLE THE CAKE

Put a cake layer on a flat serving platter or a cake stand lined with strips of waxed paper to keep it clean while icing. Top the layer with half of the filling, spreading it evenly with an offset spatula almost to the cake's edge. Repeat with a second cake layer and the remaining filling. Top with the last cake layer.

### MAKE THE MERINGUE

Put the sugar and egg whites in the metal bowl of a stand mixer (make sure it's clean) and set over a pot of simmering water.



### spiked meringue

Once the cake is frosted, use your fingers to fluff and pull the meringue into spikes all over the cake. Work your way around the cake and keep at it until you're happy with the results.





Whisk constantly until the sugar melts completely, 3 to 4 minutes. Rub a small amount between your fingers to make sure all of the sugar grains have melted.

Transfer the bowl to the mixer, fitted with the whisk attachment, and whisk at low speed until the mixture becomes completely opaque and begins to thicken, about 4 minutes. Raise the speed to medium and beat until thickened to soft peaks that barely hold their shape and flop over when the beater is lifted, 5 to 7 minutes. Finally, raise the speed to high and beat until glossy and thickened to medium-firm peaks that stand up stiffly but curl slightly at the tip when the beater is lifted, about 4 minutes more.

Using an offset spatula, apply the meringue thickly over the entire cake—don't worry about spreading it smoothly or you'll overwork the meringue (you may not need all of it). Then, repeatedly poke your fingertips into the meringue, pulling it into spikes all over the cake. Remove the waxed paper strips.

Using a kitchen torch, brown the meringue by holding the torch 2 to 3 inches from the meringue and waving the flame over the cake until it's browned all over.



#### MAKE AHEAD

You can bake, cool, wrap, and store the cake layers at room temperature for up to 1 day or freeze for up to 1 month. You can refrigerate the assembled cake (without the meringue topping) for up to 4 hours before decorating it. Wait to make the meringue until you're ready to finish the cake.



## dark chocolate and coconut popcorn

*Popcorn as dessert? Why not, when it's streaked with dark chocolate melted by the heat of the just-popped popcorn and tossed with sweetened coconut.* **Serves 8 to 10**

- 1 cup sweetened shredded coconut, such as Baker's Angel Flake brand**
- ½ cup popcorn kernels**
- 3 Tbs. coconut oil**
- 4 oz. dark chocolate (70%), chopped**
- Fine sea salt**

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 300°F. Spread the coconut on a large rimmed baking sheet and bake until golden brown, about 8 minutes. Set aside to cool.

Put the oil and 2 or 3 popcorn kernels in a heavy-duty 4½- to 5½-quart pot. Partially cover and heat over medium-high heat until the kernels pop.

Add the rest of the popcorn kernels. Cover the pot most of

the way and shake the pot back and forth constantly once the heavy popping starts. After about 3 minutes, the popping should slow down; when you can count to 5 without a pop, it's done. Remove from the heat, and give the pot a final shake. Transfer to a large metal mixing bowl. Toss with the chocolate, coconut, and ½ tsp. salt. The residual heat of the popcorn should gently melt the chocolate, coating the popcorn and coconut. Refrigerate for 5 minutes. Toss the popcorn to break up any big clusters. Refrigerate for another 5 minutes and then toss again. Season to taste with additional salt.





## beef rendang

Serve this Malaysian specialty with jasmine or basmati rice and naan. Rendang is typically very thick, but if you prefer a saucier dish, you can add a little water after adding the toasted coconut at the end. **Serves 6 to 8**

### FOR THE FLAVOR BASE

- 15 dried japones chiles or 10 dried chiles de árbol or 3 Tbs. sambal oelek
- 1½ cups sliced shallots (from 4 large shallots)
- 2 Tbs. sliced garlic
- 1 Tbs. sliced peeled fresh ginger
- 1 Tbs. chopped fresh or frozen and thawed galangal (optional)

### FOR THE WHOLE SPICE BLEND

- 4 whole cloves
- 4 whole green cardamom pods
- 2 whole star anise
- 1 3-inch-long cinnamon stick, snapped in half

### FOR THE GROUND SPICE BLEND

- 2 tsp. ground coriander
- 2 tsp. ground cumin
- 2 tsp. ground fennel seeds
- 1 tsp. ground turmeric
- ½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper

### FOR THE RENDANG

- ¾ cup canola or vegetable oil; more as needed
- 2 lb. boneless top blade beef chuck (or bottom or top round, flank, or sirloin steak), cut into ½-inch-thick slices, then cut into 1½- to 2-inch pieces
- 1 13.5-oz. can unsweetened coconut milk
- ¼ cup tamarind concentrate
- 3 wild lime leaves, thinly sliced
- 2 medium lemongrass stalks, bruised with back of knife and tied in a knot

- 4 tsp. palm sugar or dark brown sugar
- 2½ tsp. table salt
- ½ cup tightly packed grated fresh coconut or unsweetened frozen coconut, thawed
- ¼ cup coarsely chopped fresh cilantro, for garnish (optional)
- Lime wedges, for garnish (optional)

### MAKE THE FLAVOR BASE

If using dried chiles, steep them in hot water until pliable, 5 to 8 minutes, then slit and seed them (use gloves). Put the chiles, shallots, garlic, ginger, galangal (if using), and ¼ cup water in a food processor and process to a coarse purée, about 3 minutes (if using whole dried chiles, you'll still see little pieces of the skins).

### MAKE THE SPICE BLENDS

In a small bowl, combine the cloves, cardamom pods, star anise, and cinnamon pieces. In a second small bowl, combine the coriander, cumin, fennel, turmeric, and pepper.

### MAKE THE RENDANG

Heat 2 Tbs. of the oil in a 12-inch skillet or wok over medium-low heat until shimmering hot. Add the whole spice blend and cook, stirring constantly, until the cinnamon sticks unfold (the cardamom may also crack open), 1 to 2 minutes; don't let the spices burn. Add another 2 Tbs. of the oil and the ground spice blend and cook, stirring constantly, until the mixture sizzles and becomes fragrant, 30 to

60 seconds more (if the spices stick to the pan, add a little more oil to prevent burning).

Add the remaining ½ cup oil and the flavor base and cook, stirring, until the purée is an intense reddish brown, about 10 minutes. Raise the heat to medium, add the beef and cook, stirring, to coat it with the spices, about 2 minutes. Add the coconut milk, tamarind concentrate, lime leaves, and lemongrass and cook, stirring constantly, until the mixture comes to a boil, about 5 minutes.

Reduce the heat to low, add the sugar and salt, and simmer, stirring occasionally for the first hour and then more frequently as the stew thickens, until the liquid is very thick and oil appears on its surface, about 1¾ hours. The meat will not be fork-tender at this point.

Meanwhile, squeeze any excess liquid from the coconut with your hands. In a 10-inch skillet, toast the coconut over low heat, stirring constantly, until golden brown, about 10 minutes. Transfer to a small bowl.

Stir the toasted coconut into the stew and then continue stirring until it's incorporated and much of the liquid is gone, about 15 minutes. Add 1 cup water if you prefer a saucy consistency. Continue to cook, stirring frequently, until the meat is fork-tender, 20 to 30 minutes more (the oil will start frothing after 15 to 20 minutes).

Remove the lemongrass, cinnamon pieces, star anise, and as many cardamom pods and cloves as you can find. Transfer the meat to a serving platter and garnish with the cilantro and lime wedges (if using). Beef rendang will keep for up to 5 days in the refrigerator, but expect it to become drier and more intense as it sits.



## cooking beef rendang



**1** Start by cooking the whole spices—cloves, cardamom pods, cinnamon pieces, and star anise—to infuse the oil with their flavor.



**2** Stir constantly as you cook the ground spices to keep them from sticking to the pan and burning.



**3** The flavor base, a purée made from aromatics like garlic, ginger, and shallot, will sizzle, darken, and become very fragrant.





**4** Stir the beef to make sure it's well coated with the spices and aromatics; you're not trying to brown it here.



**5** The tamarind concentrate and coconut milk will cook down slowly to become a very thick sauce that coats the meat.



**6** The crowning touch is toasted coconut, which blends into the sauce, adding extra texture and flavor to the finished dish.



# test kitchen

TIPS • TECHNIQUES • INGREDIENTS



To crack a coconut, you'll need a few tools that aren't usually found in the kitchen.



## TECHNIQUE

### Cracking a coconut

Fresh coconut takes some effort to crack and grate, but you will be rewarded with great flavor. Choose one that's heavy for its size. Its three eyes should be dry, and it should slosh when shaken. Avoid coconuts that are gray in color or that show wet staining, a sign that the shell is deeply cracked. A cracked outer shell is fine as long as the coconut sloshes and doesn't look wet. Ready to get cracking? Follow the steps at right.

You'll need unsweetened coconut if you're making the **Dried Cherry and Coconut Granola** on p. 73. Either use fresh coconut or check the baking aisle of your store. Often there are many options for sweetened coconut but not for unsweetened. If your store doesn't offer unsweetened shredded coconut, check health food stores.

## TIP

### How to toast and store coconut

Spread grated coconut on a baking sheet and toast in a 350°F oven until it's a rich golden brown, 5 to 10 minutes. Stir every few minutes so the coconut toasts evenly, and watch carefully, as it can go from toasted to burnt very quickly. Cool on the baking sheet before using.

Grated coconut keeps in the refrigerator for about one week or in the freezer for about three months.



1 With a Phillips screwdriver, probe the eyes until you find the one that yields easily. Push the screwdriver into this eye until you reach the liquid. Then pull it out and shake the coconut juice into a cup. You can drink the juice or discard it.



2 Wrap the coconut in a kitchen towel, set it on a sturdy surface, and bash it with a hammer until it cracks into several pieces.



3 With a regular screwdriver or an oyster knife, pry the coconut meat from the shells. If any pieces resist, bake them at 350°F for 10 to 15 minutes; they should then separate easily.



4 With a vegetable peeler, remove the brown skin from each piece of coconut. Now you're ready to grate the coconut. Use a box grater if you're up for a little arm workout, or a food processor if not.



## INGREDIENT

## Oil-cured olives

All olives, including the oil-cured ones in the **Smoked Trout and Bean Salad** on p. 53, must be cured to be palatable. That's because olives picked right off the tree have an unpleasantly bitter taste that curing mitigates. There are several mediums for curing olives, including salt, brine, and lye.

Oil-cured olives begin life as ripe (black) olives. They're first dry-cured in salt, which makes them less bitter while concentrating and enhancing their flavors. Next, the salt is removed and the olives are soaked in oil, which

is sometimes flavored with spices and herbs, adding other layers of flavor. Though these olives still have a telltale prune-like exterior that comes from salt-curing, the oil rehydrates them, making them slightly plumper and meatier.

Intensely flavored, oil-cured olives may be served on their own or added raw to salads. When cooking with them—they're delicious in braises—consider adding them toward the end of cooking because they can become bitter if overcooked. Look for them where other olives are sold.



## TIP



## Shelling peas is easy

OK, we admit it: Shelling peas is a bit tedious, but it's easy and worth every second in prepping for delicious recipes like the **Pea and Mint Soup with Lemon Cream** on p. 30. To do it, remove the stem end of the pod, peel the stringy fiber from the seam, pry the pod open, and run your thumb along the interior to detach the peas.



## Taste peas before buying

Peas are at their peak when spring turns to summer but before the days are truly hot. According to Farmer Lee Jones of The Chef's Garden, Huron, Ohio, even half a day of hot sun can speed the conversion of sugar to starch in peas, both on the vine and off. In hot conditions, farmers sometimes shell peas to keep them from overheating in the pod, which can act as an incubator. Whether you're buying peas shelled or in their pods, the important thing is to get a taste to ensure that they're sweet; at a farmers' market, you can usually ask for a sample. If buying in the pod, you'll need about a pound for a cup of peas.



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INGREDIENT

Salt-packed anchovy



Olive-oil-packed anchovy

## Know your anchovies

There are two kinds of anchovies on the market: salt-packed and oil-packed. Though many gourmets tout salt-packed anchovies as being plumper and deeper in flavor, they tend to come in large tins and need to be skinned, filleted, and rinsed. That's why we usually opt for skinned and filleted oil-packed anchovies. When shopping for them for recipes such as the **Classic Caesar Salad** on p. 23, choose a brand that's packed in olive oil (not vegetable oil) and preferably in jars, which allow you to see the size of the fillets and can be easily resealed. (Tinned anchovies have to be transferred to another container after opening; cover them with additional olive oil if necessary.) Although anchovies keep indefinitely in the refrigerator, we recommend using them within two weeks of opening, since after that their flavor becomes very pungent.

INGREDIENT

## Quick-cooking lentils

Lentils have a lot going for them. They don't need soaking, they cook in about 30 to 45 minutes, they're good for you (soybeans are the only legume with more protein), they have an earthy, slightly sweet and peppery flavor that pairs well with lots of other foods, and they come in a variety of sizes and colors, five of which are shown at right. Common brown lentils, which you'll need for the **Lentils with Indian Spices and Coconut** on p. 79, and occasionally French lentils can easily be found in supermarkets; you can find the others in specialty stores, international groceries, and online. See p. 93 for mail-order sources.



### French green

Also called *lentilles du Puy*, French green lentils hold their shape well and make an attractive salad or warm side dish. They're especially nice as a bed for fatty fish like tuna and salmon.



### Common brown

Common brown lentils are the mainstay of traditional lentil soup because they tend to fall apart and thicken the soup.



### Beluga

So called because of their resemblance to caviar, beluga lentils hold their shape and go well with fish, particularly salmon because their colors contrast beautifully.



### Split red

Also called pink lentils and, in India, *masoor dal*, split red lentils become very soft when cooked, making them ideal for soups and purées.



### Spanish pardina

Also called Spanish brown lentils, these hold their shape well and make a nice accompaniment to chicken, duck, and game birds.



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#### TECHNIQUE

### Give your herbs a shave

To quickly separate the leaves from the stems of tender herbs like parsley, dill, or cilantro, simply give the whole bunch a “shave.”

Hold the herbs by the stems over a cutting board, leaf ends angled down. With a chef’s knife, shear the leaves off the stems using a downward shaving motion, turning the bunch as you go.

This method will be handy for the **seasonal herb** recipes on pp. 24–31.



#### TECHNIQUE

### Rhubarb freezes well

If you make the recipes on pp. 62–65 and end up having extra rhubarb, freeze it. Frozen rhubarb thaws beautifully, and there’s little discernible difference between it and fresh, though frozen may release more liquid. To freeze, cut into pieces, spread in a layer on a rimmed baking sheet, and freeze until solid before transferring to a container for up to 6 months.

#### INGREDIENT

### The best “canned” tuna may come in a jar

Canned tuna in oil is great for quick meals like the **escarole and chick-pea salad** on p. 15. We were curious about which supermarket tuna tastes best, so we collected all the canned and jarred tuna we could find in our local supermarkets and tried them side by side. Without knowing which came from a can or a jar, we overwhelmingly preferred the jarred tuna samples (specifically the Sclafani and Tonnino brands shown below). The jarred tuna contained bigger pieces, was richer tasting, and had better texture. So next time we reach for canned tuna, it may very well come from a jar.





## EQUIPMENT

### Kitchen torch

To make the **Outrageous Coconut-Cream Meringue Cake** on p. 80, you'll need a kitchen torch to brown the meringue topping. If you don't have one of these butane-fueled mini blowtorches, put it on your wish list—at \$25 to \$35, it's an inexpensive addition to your kitchen arsenal, and once you own one, you'll find all sorts of excuses to fire it up. You can't make a decent crème brûlée at home without one, and it's great for charring small chiles, melting and browning cheese, or browning crumb toppings on casseroles.

We have several torches in the test kitchen, but the one we always reach for is the BonJour Chef's Torch. It's easy to use and has an adjustable flame. Plus, unlike some models, this torch has a switch that allows it to stay lit without holding down the ignition button. To buy it, see p. 93.



## TIP

### Cake success

Whether you're making the **cake** above (recipe on p. 80) or another favorite recipe, there are several steps you can take to guarantee the best results. Culled from years of testing cake recipes, these are our best tips for great cakes.

**Don't use cold ingredients** Butter, eggs, and other dairy ingredients will blend better if they're not refrigerator-cold. Unless your recipe specifically calls for cold ingredients, let them sit at room temperature until they've warmed or softened a bit. Don't let your butter get too warm, though—the ideal temperature is around 65°F, just shy of room temperature.

**Cream thoroughly** Three to five minutes of beating butter and sugar together may seem excessive when they appear combined much sooner, but proper creaming is key to a light cake. A lengthy creaming time ensures that enough air bubbles are created to lift the cake. If you're using a hand mixer, add an extra minute to your creaming time.

**Start slowly** To keep dry ingredients from flying out of the bowl as you mix them into wet ingredients, run the mixer on low speed at first just until moistened and then ramp it up to the speed recommended in the recipe.

**Scrape often** Even if the recipe doesn't say to do so, stop the mixer and scrape down the bowl and beater whenever it looks like your batter is blending unevenly.

**Use a scale** Not only is a scale great for measuring your ingredients, but it also makes dividing batter between cake pans faster and easier. Start by weighing your mixing bowl. When your batter is ready, weigh it in the bowl, subtract the bowl's weight, and divide by the number of pans you have to fill. Then simply weigh that amount of batter into each pan—no messing around with measuring and scraping cups of batter into each pan.

**Make sure your tools are clean** When beating egg whites for a meringue or foam cake, make sure your bowl and whisk are spotless. Even a trace of fat on your equipment can slow down foaming and decrease the overall volume.

**Use straight-sided cake pans** Some cake pans are made with slightly slanted sides—not ideal for layered cakes. Before you begin, make sure your cake pans are straight-sided so your finished cake will stack neatly. If you need to purchase some straight-sided pans, we recommend Magic Line pans (see p. 93 for a mail-order source).





# CREDITS

Many of the recipes and photos in this issue have appeared previously in *Fine Cooking*. Listed here are the original authors and issue numbers. Unless otherwise noted, all photos are by Scott Phillips.

## make it tonight

Grilled Flap Steak and Asparagus with Béarnaise Butter, Jennifer Armentrout, #141

Pasta with Peas, Arugula, and Prosciutto, Ali Edwards, #58

Deviled Pork Chops, Lori Longbotham, #84

Tuna, Escarole, and Chickpea Salad with Warm Herb-Garlic Vinaigrette, Abby Simchak Donovan, #134

Chicken, Shiitake, and Watercress Stir-Fry, Laura B. Russell, #140

Almond-Crusted Halibut, Bonnie Jean Gorder-Hinchey, #116

## preserving the season

Twice-Marinated Mushrooms, Allison Ehri Kreidler, #98

## 3 ways

Grapefruit Slaw; Grilled Grapefruit Halves with Honey, Brown Sugar, and Pistachios; Grapefruit Curd, Abby Simchak Donovan, #134

## repertoire

Classic Caesar Salad, Susie Middleton, #104

## seasonal herbs

Spring Vegetables with Garlic Dill Sauce, Ronne Day, not previously published

Shrimp and Cannellini Salad with Tarragon Vinaigrette, Jessica Bard, #80

Cilantro-Pepita Hummus, Marge Perry, #139

Spring Vegetable and Potato Frittata, David Bonom, #71

Pea and Mint Soup with Lemon Cream, Annie Wayte, #92

Jasmine Rice with Toasted Pine Nuts and Chives, Ronne Day, #136

## vegetables, steamed and sauced

Lemony Brown-Butter Sauce with Chives; Peppercorn-Parmesan Cream Sauce; Lemony Tahini Sauce; Balsamic-Bacon Vinaigrette Sauce; Curry-Yogurt Sauce, Jennifer Armentrout, #78

## easy spring supper

Salad of Roast Chicken and Spring Vegetables with Lemony Dressing; Garlic-Parmesan Bread; Goat Cheese Spread with Herbs and Olive Oil; Chocolate-Raspberry Cookies and Cream, Martha Holmberg, #78

## eggs in 10

Smoked Salmon Salad with Soft-Boiled Eggs; Pineapple Matzo Brei; Curried Egg Salad and Cucumber Sandwiches; Lemony Egg Soup with Peas; Spinach-Noodle Soup with Poached Eggs; Tomato-Harissa Poached Eggs; Wild Mushroom Salad with Fried Eggs; Scrambled Egg Torta; Poached Egg and Asparagus Toasts with Lemon-Chive Beurre Blanc; Shrimp, Bacon, and Egg Pancake, Layla Schlack, #134

## 10 ways to cook with culture

Smoked Trout and Bean Salad, Nicolaus Balla & Cortney Burns, #136

Yogurt Cake with Chocolate Ganache Frosting, from *Big Buy Cooking* by Tony Rosenfeld, photo: Maren Caruso

Tomato-Basil Tart with Yogurt Custard, Cheryl Sternman Rule, #141

Cucumber-Yogurt Dip (Tzatziki), Susanna Hoffman, #93

Orange-Roasted Salmon with Yogurt-Caper Sauce, Molly Stevens, #89

Yogurt-Marinated Roast Chicken; Spiced Yogurt Waffles with Toasted-Pecan Maple Syrup, Samantha Seneviratne, #108

Creamy Orange-Vanilla Ice Pops, Fany Gerson, #112

Spiced Lentil Soup with Herbed Yogurt, Tony Rosenfeld, #62

Cucumber, Fennel, and Roasted Potato Salad with Parsleyed Yogurt, Barbara Lynch, #92

## rhubarb's greatest hits

Strawberry-Rhubarb Compote with Vanilla and Cardamom; Strawberry-Rhubarb Pie; Rhubarb Brown Sugar Crumble; Cinnamon-Rhubarb Muffins, Karen Barker, #85

## one simple method, four delicious pasta dinners

Ziti with Mushrooms, Pancetta, and Peas; Spaghetti with Shrimp in Curry Cream Sauce; Penne with Tomato Vodka Cream Sauce; Rigatoni Normandy, Bruce Weinstein & Mark Scarbrough, #50

## versatile coconut

Dried Cherry and Coconut Granola, Debbie Koenig, #126

Coconut Macaroons, Dan Cohen, #134

Curried Coconut Rice Pilaf, Jennifer Armentrout, #57

Chocolate, Coconut, and Almond Bread, Abigail Johnson Dodge, #125

Beer-Battered Coconut Shrimp with Rémoûlade Sauce, Joanna Pruess, #119

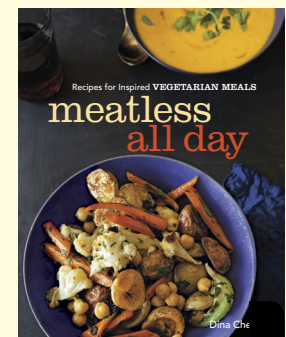
Lentils with Indian Spices and Coconut, from *Meatless All Day* by Dina Cheney, photo: Kate Sears

Outrageous Coconut-Cream Meringue Cake, Rebecca Rather, #102

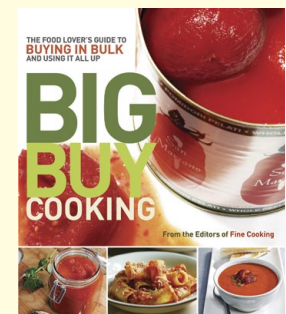
Dark Chocolate and Coconut Popcorn, Karen DeMasco, #138

Beef Rendang, Susheela Raghavan, #116

Some of the recipes and photos in this issue were excerpted from these books:



*Meatless All Day* by Dina Cheney (The Taunton Press, 2014); photos © Kate Sears; food stylist: Paul Grimes.



*Big Buy Cooking* by Fine Cooking (The Taunton Press, 2010); photos © Maren Caruso; food stylist: Katie Christ.



# SOURCES

## beef rendang, page 82

From Penzeys.com,  
800-741-7787:

- **Whole green cardamom pods**, \$6.85 for a 0.5-oz. jar.
- **Whole star anise**, \$4.89 for a 1-oz. bag.

From Templeofthai.com,  
877-811-8773:

- **Tamarind concentrate**, \$4.99 for 14 oz.
- **Fresh wild (kaffir) lime leaves**, \$5.49 for 1.5 oz.
- **Fresh galangal**, \$5.69 for 4 oz.
- **Palm sugar**, \$3.99 for 1 lb.



## outrageous coconut-cream meringue cake,

page 80

- **Kitchen torch**, \$27.99, Bonjourproducts.com, 800-226-6568.



## test kitchen, page 84

- **Lentils**, multiple varieties, from \$3.49 per 1 lb., Kalustyans.com, 212-685-3541.
- **Magic Line straight-sided cake pan**, \$6.59, Sweettreatsupply.com, 309-747-2125.

## grilled flap steak and asparagus with béarnaise butter, page 13

- **Thermapen digital instant-read thermometer**, \$99, Thermoworks.com, 800-393-6434.



## smoked trout and bean salad,

page 53

- **Smoked trout fillets**, \$22 for 1 lb., Wholey.com, 412-391-3737.

## spiced yogurt waffles,

page 59

- **10-piece glass bowl set**, \$39.95, Williams-sonoma.com, 877-812-6235.
- **Waffle iron**, Chef's Choice Classic Belgian Waffle Maker, \$39.96, Amazon.com, 866-216-1072.



## cilantro-pepita hummus, page 28

- **Lieber's Sesame Tahini**, \$4.49 for 17.5 oz., Rocklandkosher.com, 855-756-7437.
- **Whole Foods 365 Everyday Value Organic Tahini**, \$13.97 for 1 lb., Amazon.com, 866-216-1072.



## twice-marinated mushrooms, page 18

- **Pint-sized jars**, \$11.99 for 12, Freshpreservingstore.com, 800-240-3340.



# NUTRITION

RECIPE	CALORIES (KCAL)	FAT CAL (KCAL)	PROTEIN (G)	CARB (G)	TOTAL FAT (G)	SAT FAT (G)	MONO FAT (G)	POLY FAT (G)	CHOL (MG)	SODIUM (MG)	FIBER (G)
<b>MAKE IT TONIGHT, p. 13</b>											
Grilled Flap Steak & Asparagus with Béarnaise Butter	430	250	38	3	28	13	12	1.5	115	360	1
Pasta with Peas, Arugula, and Prosciutto	620	250	30	60	28	12	11	2	70	2175	5
Deviled Pork Chops	650	270	85	6	30	10	14	2	230	870	0
Tuna, Escarole, and Chickpea Salad with Vinaigrette	510	210	41	36	24	4.5	11	3	40	1180	12
Chicken, Shiitake, and Watercress Stir-Fry	240	120	22	6	14	2.5	7	3.5	105	370	1
Almond-Crusted Halibut	590	420	32	12	47	6	31	7	105	390	4
<b>PRESERVING THE SEASON, p. 18</b>											
Twice-Marinated Mushrooms	200	180	2	3	20	3	15	2	0	75	1
<b>3 WAYS, p. 20</b>											
Grapefruit Slaw	170	80	3	21	9	1	2	6	0	25	8
Grilled Grapefruit Halves with Honey & Pistachios	330	130	4	47	14	7	5	1.5	25	55	7
Grapefruit Curd (per 1 Tbs.)	80	45	1	7	5	3	1.5	0	70	5	0
<b>REPertoire, p. 22</b>											
Classic Caesar Salad	260	160	8	17	18	9	6	1.5	45	760	4
<b>SEASONAL HERBS, p. 24</b>											
Spring Vegetables with Garlic Dill Sauce	130	70	3	15	8	2	4.5	.5	5	330	4
Shrimp and Cannellini Salad with Tarragon Vinaigrette	190	110	6	13	12	1.5	8	1.5	20	360	4
Cilantro-Pepita Hummus	220	130	7	16	15	2	7	4.5	0	260	4
Spring Vegetable and Potato Frittata	480	300	29	16	33	14	14	3	475	1010	2
Pea and Mint Soup with Lemon Cream	200	110	7	17	12	7	3.5	.5	35	240	5
Jasmine Rice with Toasted Pine Nuts and Chives	290	130	4	37	14	6	4	3	25	160	1
<b>VEGETABLES, STEAMED AND SAUCED, p. 32</b>											
Lemony Brown-Butter Sauce with Chives	70	70	0	1	8	5	2	0	20	50	0
Peppercorn-Parmesan Cream Sauce	40	35	1	1	4	2	1	0	35	45	0
Lemony Tahini Sauce	45	35	1	2	4	.5	1.5	1.5	0	25	0
Balsamic-Bacon Vinaigrette Sauce	80	70	1	1	8	1	5	1	0	100	0
Curry-Yogurt Sauce	40	30	1	2	3.5	2	1	0	10	60	0
<b>EASY SPRING SUPPER, p. 38</b>											
Salad of Roast Chicken & Vegetables with Dressing	510	325	34	15	36	6	22	7	85	550	5
Garlic-Parmesan Bread	370	190	8	38	21	11	6	2	45	650	2
Goat Cheese Spread with Herbs and Olive Oil	210	140	8	7	16	8	6	1	25	330	0
Chocolate-Raspberry Cookies and Cream	310	160	3	36	18	10	5	1	50	200	4
<b>EGGS IN 10, p. 46</b>											
Smoked-Salmon Salad with Soft-Boiled Eggs	230	140	18	4	16	3	10	2.5	195	1020	1
Pineapple Matzo Brei	230	80	8	29	9	5	3	1	155	125	0
Curried Egg Salad and Cucumber Sandwiches	660	350	19	61	39	8	10	19	390	930	4

The nutritional analyses have been calculated by a registered dietitian at Nutritional Solutions in Melville, New York. When a recipe gives a choice of ingredients, the first choice is the one used. Optional ingredients with measured amounts are included; ingredients without specific quantities are not. Analyses are per serving; when a range of ingredient amounts or servings is given, the smaller amount or portion is used. When the quantities of salt and pepper aren't specified, the analysis is based on ¼ tsp. salt and ¼ tsp. pepper per serving for entrées, and ½ tsp. salt and ¼ tsp. pepper per serving for side dishes.



RECIPE	CALORIES (KCAL)	FAT CAL (KCAL)	PROTEIN (G)	CARB (G)	TOTAL FAT (G)	SAT FAT (G)	MONO FAT (G)	POLY FAT (G)	CHOL (MG)	SODIUM (MG)	FIBER (G)
Lemony Egg Soup with Peas	180	70	13	16	8	3.5	2.5	1	105	340	4
Spinach-Noodle Soup with Poached Eggs	500	160	30	60	18	3.5	9	4.5	195	1030	3
Tomato-Harissa Poached Eggs	360	130	14	44	14	3	8	2	185	790	7
Wild Mushroom Salad with Fried Eggs	400	320	11	12	36	14	16	3	230	620	4
Scrambled Egg Torta	380	210	17	24	24	9	10	3	305	620	5
Poached Egg and Asparagus Toasts w/ Beurre Blanc	380	270	10	16	30	17	8	3	245	500	1
Shrimp, Bacon, and Egg Pancake	290	80	43	6	9	2.5	3	2.5	415	570	1
<b>10 WAYS TO GET CULTURE, p. 52</b>											
Smoked Trout and Bean Salad	310	170	14	21	19	3.5	6	9	30	500	8
Yogurt Cake with Chocolate Ganache Frosting	400	180	7	49	21	12	6	1	85	240	2
Tomato-Basil Tart with Yogurt Custard	360	220	11	24	24	12	9	2	140	500	2
Cucumber-Yogurt Dip (per 1 Tbs.)	15	10	1	0	1.5	1	0	0	0	30	0
Orange-Roasted Salmon with Yogurt-Caper Sauce	340	160	40	2	18	3	8	5	110	300	0
Yogurt-Marinaded Roast Chicken	530	270	59	1	30	8	12	6	190	520	0
Creamy Orange-Vanilla Ice Pops	80	20	2	13	2.5	2	0	0	5	15	0
Spiced Yogurt Waffles w/Toasted-Pecan Maple Syrup	330	100	6	52	11	2.5	5	3.5	50	280	2
Spiced Lentil Soup with Herbed Yogurt	350	160	17	34	17	6	9	2	20	420	16
Cucumber, Fennel & Potato Salad with Yogurt	210	100	6	22	11	4.5	6	1	10	270	4
<b>RHUBARB'S GREATEST HITS, p. 62</b>											
Rhubarb Compote w/Vanilla (per ¼ cup)	50	0	1	13	0	0	0	0	0	15	1
Strawberry-Rhubarb Pie	630	260	6	87	29	13	9	4.5	50	150	4
Rhubarb Brown Sugar Crumble	430	120	3	77	14	8	3.5	.5	35	100	3
Cinnamon-Rhubarb Muffins	250	110	4	32	12	7	2.5	0	70	200	1
<b>ONE SIMPLE METHOD, FOUR DELICIOUS PASTA DINNERS, p. 66</b>											
Ziti with Mushrooms, Pancetta, and Peas	620	250	17	72	28	12	12	2	60	180	5
Spaghetti with Shrimp in Curry Cream Sauce	670	250	36	66	28	11	11	3	225	410	6
Penne with Tomato Vodka Cream Sauce	590	250	14	62	27	12	12	2	60	240	4
Rigatoni Normandy	650	220	31	62	25	14	7	1	120	260	4
<b>VERSATILE COCONUT, p. 72</b>											
Dried Cherry and Coconut Granola (per ¼ cup)	120	60	3	14	7	2	4	1.5	0	55	2
Coconut Macaroons	140	60	2	19	7	6	.5	0	5	95	2
Curried Coconut Rice Pilaf	359	130	8	51	15	4	7	2	1	226	2
Chocolate, Coconut, and Almond Bread	460	240	7	54	27	17	7	1.5	65	350	4
Beer-Battered Coconut Shrimp w/Rémoulade Sauce	530	350	25	16	40	7	12	17	185	980	1
Lentils with Indian Spices and Coconut	630	190	25	89	22	13	2.5	4.5	0	390	19
Outrageous Coconut-Cream Meringue Cake	700	290	9	96	32	21	8	1.5	145	250	1
Dark Chocolate and Coconut Popcorn	200	120	3	17	14	10	2	0	0	150	3
Beef Rendang	640	410	28	28	46	17	19	7	50	840	7



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# Spring's Stars

Twelve ways to use four seasonal ingredients we can't get enough of.

## Leeks

### Leek, Mushroom, and Goat Cheese Crostini

Sauté sliced leeks and mixed fresh mushrooms in plenty of butter; season with salt and pepper. Season soft goat cheese with salt, pepper, and chopped fresh herbs. Spread the goat cheese on toasted baguette slices and top with the leek mixture. Serve as an hors d'oeuvre.

### Scrambled Eggs with Leeks and Goat Cheese

Sauté chopped leeks in butter until tender. Add lightly beaten eggs, crumbled goat cheese, and fresh herbs (lemon thyme is especially good). Scramble and serve warm with a green salad and toasted baguette.

### Spring Pea and Leek Fettuccine

Boil fettuccine in well-salted water until al dente; drain, reserving some of the pasta water. Sauté sliced leeks in butter with salt and pepper until soft. Add shelled peas and lemon zest and cook until tender. Stir in the pasta, some of the cooking water, and fresh lemon juice to taste; season with salt and pepper. Garnish with thinly sliced mint leaves.



## Papaya

### Papaya Smoothie

Blend diced ripe papaya with plain yogurt, sweetened condensed milk, brown sugar, vanilla extract, ground cinnamon, and ice. If the smoothie is too thick, thin it with a little regular milk or water.

### Papaya-Tomatillo Salsa

In a small bowl, combine diced ripe papaya, diced tomatillo, minced jalapeño (seeds and ribs removed), and chopped red onion. Toss with fresh lime juice, a little olive oil, chopped fresh cilantro, and salt and pepper. Serve with tortilla chips.

### Green Papaya Salad

Toss grated or julienned green (unripe) papaya with fresh lime juice, fish sauce, chopped fresh mint, chopped peanuts, and minced fresh Thai chiles. This salad makes a great bed for stir-fried chicken or shrimp.

## Sugar Snap Peas

### Braised Sugar Snap Peas and Radishes

Melt some butter in a skillet and add sugar snap peas and quartered red radishes. Add a little chicken broth and cook, partially covered, until the radishes are just tender. Stir in a splash of sherry vinegar and top with chopped fresh mint, tarragon, or chervil.

### Sugar Snap Pea and Couscous Salad

Prepare couscous according to package directions. Fluff with a fork and stir in lots of thinly sliced sugar snap peas. Toss with a sesame dressing made from seasoned rice vinegar, soy sauce, chili sauce (like Sriracha), Asian sesame oil, and toasted sesame seeds.

### Sugar Snap Peas with Jicama and Mushrooms

Sauté mushrooms until just tender. Add sugar snap peas, julienned jicama, and sliced scallions. Sauté until the peas are crisp-tender. Season to taste with salt and pepper.



## Nectarines

### Caramelized Nectarines with Rosemary Maple Syrup

Sear nectarine halves cut side down in a hot cast-iron skillet with a touch of peanut oil. Boil rosemary sprigs in maple syrup to infuse. Drizzle the syrup on top of the nectarine halves and serve with a dollop of crème fraîche.

### BLN (Bacon-Lettuce-Nectarine) Sandwich

Melt some Gruyère on a piece of toast. Spread another piece of toast with mustard. Make a sandwich with crisp pieces of bacon, baby greens, and pitted, sliced nectarine.

### Roasted Nectarines with Gorgonzola

Slice firm-ripe nectarines into sixths and toss with olive oil, honey, salt, and pepper. Roast until barely softened, sprinkle crumbled Gorgonzola on top, and then continue to roast until the cheese starts to melt. Serve warm over a lemony arugula salad, along with crusty bread.



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