

5-Ingredient Mediterranean Cookbook

Quick & Easy Mediterranean Diet Recipes for Heart-
Healthy Cooking

28-Day Meal Plan

Grocery List

Linda Gilmore



CONTENTS

Welcome to the Mediterranean Diet

The Power of 5 Ingredients

Essential Mediterranean Pantry

Tips for Cooking with 5 Ingredients

Mediterranean Mornings

Greek Yogurt with Honey and Walnuts

Scrambled Eggs with Feta & Olives

Date & Almond Energy Bites

Manaqish Za'atar

Mediterranean-Inspired Buddha Bowl

Shakshuka

Labneh with Olive Oil & Herbs

Greek Semolina Porridge (Halvā Me Simigdáli)

Greek Chicken Pita

Vibrant Salads, Soups & Small Plates

Tabbouleh

Greek Village Salad (Horiatiki)

Simple Fattoush (Crispy Pita Salad)

Grilled Zucchini Salad

Beetroot Orange Salad

Shrimp, Avocado & Grapefruit Salad

Baba Ghanoush

Muhammara (Red Pepper & Walnut Dip)

Red Lentil Soup (Mercimek Çorbası)

Chickpea & Tomato Stew

Greek Lemon Chicken Soup (Avgolemono)

Hearty Vegetarian & Plant-Based

Roasted Peppers

Eggplant Rolls with Walnuts & Garlic

Roasted Cauliflower with Tahini Sauce

Stuffed Bell Peppers with Rice

Stuffed Grape Leaves (Dolma)

Zucchini Fritters with Yogurt Dip

Bulgur Pilaf

Greek Spanakopita

Seafood & Protein-Packed Meals

Grilled Baby Squid with Lemon & Thyme

Shrimp Stew

Grilled Octopus with Vegetables

Lemon & Garlic Fish

Stuffed Sardines

White Fish Stew

Grilled Mackerel with Tomatoes

Baked Cod with Golden Breadcrumb Crust

Greek Lemon Chicken Skewers

Sautéed Liver with Onions and Herbs

Harissa spiced Chicken

Moroccan Style Kefta

Roasted Lamb Shoulder

Moroccan Roast Lamb (Méchoui)

Baked Kibbeh

Breads, Sides & Snacks

Homemade Pita Bread
Turkish Gözleme (Spinach & Feta Flatbread)
Braised Chickpeas with Feta & Yogurt
Mujaddara (Lentils & Rice with Caramelized Onions)
Penne all'Arrabbiata with Burrata
Sautéed Greens
Olive Tapenade

Sweet Finishes & Refreshing Drinks

Greek Yogurt & Honey Parfait
Sicilian Strawberry & Citrus Ricotta Salad
Simple Baklava
Date & Nut Energy Balls
Sesame Halva Bars
Almendrados
Mint & Lemon Tea
Herbal Infusion
Turkish Coffee

28-Day Meal Plan

Week 1
Grocery List – Week 1 (for 4 people)
Week 2
Grocery List – Week 2 (for 4 people)
Week 3
Grocery List – Week 3 (for 4 people)
Week 4
Grocery List – Week 4 (for 4 people)

What to Read Next?



Welcome

I spent my summer school vacations surrounded by sun-ripened tomatoes, spicy olives, fragrant herbs, and golden olive oil. My family is originally from the Mediterranean, and we still spend summers at the family home in Sicily. So, I've been immersed in this amazing, native-to-my-heart cuisine all my life, and I write about it. Every meal has been a celebration of flavor, of family, of life itself. And now I want to share that joy with you.

Look, I get it. Life is a whirlwind. And while we all dream of slow-cooked Mediterranean stews and big family feasts, most of the time, we need something quick, easy, and you get the idea, delicious. That's why I created this cookbook - to give you the heart of Mediterranean cooking, but with just five ingredients. No crazy grocery lists for miles! With a handful of fresh, simple products, you can bring a Mediterranean vibe to your table, no matter where you live.

Yes, some of these super traditional Mediterranean ingredients can be hard to find in your grocery stores. But don't worry, I've tweaked these recipes to be just as flavorful and delicious as the ones my family has been making for years. A quick weekday dinner or a relaxed family meal on the weekend will require minimal effort and time.

Mediterranean cuisine is an excuse to gather around the table with nears and dears, share stories, and, of course, eat delicious food. It's colorful foods and vibrant flavors, fresh aromas, and the cozy feeling of a home-cooked meal. I hope this book gives you a slice of the Mediterranean - a little sunshine, a lot of love, and a lot of delicious simplicity. Let's get cooking!

WELCOME TO THE MEDITERRANEAN DIET

So, the Mediterranean diet? It's more of a, uh, a vibe, a way of living, eating, spending time that has been around for ages, and for good reason! There's always laughter and interesting stories at our table, and delicious and fresh food on the table. Simple, healthy, and just plain delicious.

I was very lucky to grow up with the smell of wild rosemary, the taste of toasted almonds, the sound of waves, and long, cool lunches with my family. Cooking wasn't a boring chore. We talked, we had fun, we gave love. Even a few ripe tomatoes with olive oil, a crusty crust of bread, and a handful of olives seemed like a feast. That's what Mediterranean cuisine is all about - just good ingredients and the love of good food - nothing complicated or time-consuming.

And here's the best part: you don't need to live by the sea or have access to a farmer's market with Mediterranean products to live this lifestyle. The essence of it - vegetables, healthy fats, lean protein, whole grains - is everywhere. And frankly, it's one of the most delicious ways to live life.

Scientists have come up with what Mediterranean families have always known: this food is actually good for you. It's full of heart-healthy fats, fiber-rich foods, and nutrients that support overall health. And let's be honest, this food isn't boring at all. We add lots of spices and spices and combine bright citrus fruits and sunny vegetables. Each bite tells its own story - of warm sunshine, of family recipes passed down from generation to generation, of a culture that takes joy in food.

I know life gets crazy busy. We don't always have time to slow cook beans or bake vegetables for hours. Mediterranean recipes can be simple, delicious, and quick to prepare. This is a journey not for the sake of limitations but for enjoying food in its most vibrant, life-giving form.

THE POWER OF 5 INGREDIENTS

When it comes to cooking, more is not always better. In fact, some of the most delicious Mediterranean dishes are built on the idea that less is more. By focusing on just five ingredients, you allow each one to shine and not get lost in the flavor mix.

Think of the perfect Caprese salad - just ripe tomatoes, fresh mozzarella, flavorful basil, olive oil, and some sea salt. Nothing superfluous. But each ingredient complements the others perfectly. Simple dishes and minimal processing allow quality ingredients to bring out their flavors and aromas.

Plus, fewer ingredients means less hassle: less shopping, less chopping, and fewer dishes to wash. Instead of juggling a long list of ingredients, spend your time and resources on buying really good ones. A few awesome ingredients will always beat a dozen mediocre ones.

Cooking with fewer ingredients actually makes you more creative! You start figuring out how to amp up the flavor with simple techniques - stir-frying for natural sweetness, adding fresh herbs for spice, or lemon for extra sharpness. The result? Dishes that are effortless to prepare but still taste exquisite.

We're all very busy and don't want to spend hours in the kitchen. Dishes with just five ingredients are quick and easy to prepare, and yet they are incredibly tasty. Whether it's a fresh salad, a hearty soup, or a satisfying main course, you can create something amazing with minimal effort.

I try to make Mediterranean cuisine accessible, not some crazy challenge. I strip away all the extra steps and focus on the essentials - great food made easy.

ESSENTIAL MEDITERRANEAN PANTRY

So, are you looking to bring a Mediterranean flair to your kitchen? You don't need a fancy pantry to do it! Just a few key elements will suffice.

Olive oil as liquid gold

Let's start with the most obvious - olive oil. It's the heart and soul of Mediterranean cuisine. Let's start with the most obvious - olive oil. It's the heart and soul of Mediterranean cuisine. Drizzle it on salads and use it for cooking. Choose a good extra virgin oil because it tastes good and is rich in healthy fats and antioxidants.

Fresh herbs for bold flavors

Can you imagine Mediterranean cuisine without fresh herbs? Me neither! Basil, parsley, mint, oregano, thyme, and rosemary enliven dishes. They bring life to all dishes. It's best to use fresh, but in a pinch, dried herbs will work, too.

A splash of sunshine from citrus fruits

Lemons, oranges, and limes - they bring brightness and balance the flavors like magic. And the zest? It's a flavor changer! If you have lemons, you're already halfway to success.

Garlic and onions are at the heart of the flavor

These two ingredients are the foundation of many sauces, soups, and stir-fries. They add heat, a bit of sweetness, and an irresistible flavor.

Tomatoes: Fresh, canned or sun-dried

Fresh tomatoes go into salads and salsa, canned tomatoes go into hearty stews and sauces, and sun-dried tomatoes add rich, umami flavor to pasta and sauces. Always keep tomatoes on hand.

Legumes and grains as a base

Chickpeas, lentils, beans, and whole grains like bulgur, farro, and couscous are key sources of plant-based protein and fiber. They turn simple five-ingredient recipes into hearty and complete meals.

Some cheese

Feta, halloumi, and ricotta salata add a salty, creamy element that perfectly balances the acidity and herbs. A sprinkle of cheese can transform a dish.

Nuts and seeds: Crunch and nutrition

Almonds, walnuts, pine nuts, and sesame seeds add crunch, richness, and healthy fats to a dish. A handful of toasted nuts can transform a salad into something special.

Spices as a finishing touch

Paprika, cumin, coriander, cinnamon, and saffron can completely change the character of a dish. Warmth, savory, whatever you want.

Olive oil, salt, and pepper are not among the five ingredients in our recipes. They are a must for almost all dishes and should always be in your pantry.

TIPS FOR COOKING WITH 5 INGREDIENTS

When you cook with a small number of ingredients, you highlight original flavors without unnecessary complications. Here are a few tips to help you make the most of five-ingredient Mediterranean dishes.

Sensible ingredient substitutions

One of the best parts of Mediterranean cuisine is its flexibility. If you can't find a certain ingredient, there's almost always a great alternative that will keep the dish authentic and flavorful.

- **Don't have fresh basil?** Try parsley for brightness, mint for refreshment, or dried oregano for a more vibrant Mediterranean flavor.
- **No feta?** Goat cheese, ricotta salata, or even crumbly queso fresco can substitute.
- **No lemons?** You can add red wine vinegar, apple cider vinegar, or a squeeze of lime.
- **Can't find fresh tomatoes?** Dried tomatoes (soaked in warm water), canned tomatoes, or cherry tomatoes will work.
- **Don't have chickpeas for hummus?** White beans, black-eyed peas, or even roasted eggplant (for a baba ghanoush-style dip) work surprisingly well.
- **No zucchini?** Eggplant, yellow squash, or even bell peppers are great substitutes in Mediterranean sautés and stir-fries.
- **No olives?** Capers or pickled artichokes will give the dish a savory flavor.
- **No pine nuts for pesto?** Try almonds, walnuts, or sunflower seeds - they give a similar texture and nutty flavor.
- **Don't have fresh seafood?** Canned tuna or sardines in olive oil can be a fantastic and flavorful alternative.
- **No couscous?** Replace it with quinoa, bulgur, or even cauliflower rice.
- **No Greek yogurt?** Regular yogurt, labneh, or even sour cream can be used in dips and dressings.

- **No halloumi?** Try paneer or firm tofu - they have a similar texture and stand up well to grilling.

The key is to make sure all substitutions belong to the Mediterranean family - that way, you maintain the integrity of the dish while working with what's available.

Personalize recipes without losing authenticity

Simplifying recipes doesn't mean sacrificing authenticity. In Mediterranean cuisine, everything is balanced: acid, fat, freshness, and just the right amount of spices. Here's how you can modify recipes while staying true to their roots:

- **Adjust to your taste:** Love garlic? Add another clove. Prefer a little heat? Red pepper flakes will be just right.
- **Season wisely:** Salt, pepper, and olive oil are your best friends. Use them to give your dish a touch of sophistication.
- **Experiment with textures:** Crunchy nuts, creamy yogurt, or a dash of honey can take a dish from good to incredible almost effortlessly.
- **Play with fresh and dried herbs:** Fresh herbs add brightness to a dish, while dried herbs add deep, concentrated flavor. Use them wisely to create balance.
- **Mix proteins:** If a recipe calls for fish but you prefer chicken, substitute it. The Mediterranean diet calls for lean proteins, so you'll have plenty of options.

Basic tools for quick and flavorful cooking

Having the right tools makes cooking even easier. You don't need a kitchen packed with gadgets - just a few essentials to help you create magic in minutes.

- **A good chef's knife:** Cook faster (and safer) with a sharp knife that slices herbs, vegetables, and proteins with ease.
- **Sturdy cutting board:** Wood or bamboo is best for durability and easy cleanup.
- **Cast iron or non-stick skillet:** Perfect for roasting meats, sautéing vegetables, or cooking in one pan with minimal cleanup.
- **Baking Sheet:** A sheet pan is a lifesaver when you want to bake vegetables, seafood, or proteins with almost no effort.

- **Microplane or grater:** Fresh citrus zest, garlic, and hard cheeses add flavor to dishes without the need for extra ingredients.
- **Blender or food processor:** Great for making quick dips, sauces, and soups that are ready in no time.

Cooking with just five ingredients means working smarter, not harder. With a few simple substitutions, a little creativity, and the right tools, you can cook Mediterranean-style meals. Get cooking!

MEDITERRANEAN MORNINGS

GREEK YOGURT WITH HONEY AND WALNUTS



You can substitute walnuts for almonds, pistachios, or pecans. If honey is not available, date syrup works great. Fresh berries, figs, or pomegranate molasses will add a more vibrant flavor. Protein breakfast lovers use high-protein Greek yogurt or add a scoop of protein powder.

Servings: 2

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Cook Time: 0 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1½ cups (360 g) Greek yogurt (full-fat or low-fat)
- 2 Tbsp. raw honey
- ¼ cup (30 g) walnuts, chopped
- ½ tsp. cinnamon (optional)
- 1 tsp. lemon zest (optional, for extra freshness)

HOW TO COOK:

1. Divide the Greek yogurt equally into two serving bowls.
2. Drizzle each bowl with one tablespoon of honey.
3. Sprinkle chopped walnuts on top. For a crunchier texture, toast the walnuts in a dry pan for 2 - 3 minutes before adding them.
4. Add a pinch of cinnamon and lemon zest if you like.
5. Serve the yogurt chilled or at room temperature, as desired. Enjoy it immediately!

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 225, Carbs: 22 g, Chol: 5 mg, Sodium: 50 mg, Fats: 10 g, Saturated Fats: 2 g, Protein: 14, Fiber: 1 g, Sugars: 19 g, Potassium: 300 mg

SCRAMBLED EGGS WITH FETA & OLIVES



For the best flavor, use high-quality Greek feta in brine. You can use goat cheese / ricotta instead of feta. If you like the creamy texture of eggs, add milk or cream and whisk lightly.

In place of mild-tasting black olives, try adding green olives or capers.

Servings: 2

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Cook Time: 5 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 large eggs
- ¼ cup (60 g) feta cheese, crumbled
- ¼ cup (35 g) black olives, pitted and halved
- 2 Tbsp. sun-dried tomatoes/ cherry tomatoes/ bell peppers, chopped
- 2 Tbsp. fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- Salt & black pepper, to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Whisk the eggs in a bowl with a pinch of salt and black pepper.
2. Heat the olive oil in a non-stick skillet.
3. Pour in large eggs and cook, stirring gently, until they begin to set. For extra creaminess, cook the eggs on low heat and stir constantly.
4. Add the feta, olives, and sun-dried tomatoes. Continue cooking until the eggs have set but still creamy.
5. Sprinkle with fresh parsley and serve immediately.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 290, Carbs: 6 g, Chol: 380 mg, Sodium: 600 mg, Fats: 23 g, Saturated Fats: 7 g, Protein: 18, Fiber: 1 g, Sugars: 3 g, Potassium: 300 mg

DATE & ALMOND ENERGY BITES



Add a spoonful of sesame seeds or crushed walnuts to increase the protein. Add 1 tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder for a chocolaty touch.

Substitute hazelnuts, cashews, or even sunflower seeds in place of pistachios or almonds. Replace the citrus zest with a drop of vanilla extract.

Servings: 12

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 0 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup (150 g) pitted Medjool dates (or another soft date variety)
- ½ cup (70 g) raw almonds
- ¼ cup (30 g) pistachios (unsalted, shelled)
- 1 tsp. orange zest/ lemon zest, freshly grated
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- olive oil for extra moisture, if needed.

HOW TO COOK:

1. If you have hard dates, soak them in warm water for 5 - 10 minutes, then drain.
2. In a food processor, grind the raw nuts until coarsely ground.
3. Add the dates, orange zest, and cinnamon. Whisk until the mixture sticks together.
To make them chewier, add 1 teaspoon of olive oil or a little water.
4. Roll small balls.
5. Refrigerate for 15 – 20 minutes for a firmer texture. Store in the refrigerator for up to 10 days or in the freezer for up to 3 months.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 85, Carbs: 12 g, Chol: 0 mg, Sodium: 0 mg, Fats: 4 g, Saturated Fats: 0,5 g, Protein: 2, Fiber: 2 g, Sugars: 9 g, Potassium: 125 mg

MANAQISH ZA'ATAR



I have given a recipe for a flatbread from the Middle East that is sprinkled with zaatar. In Turkey, similar breads are usually topped with cheese or meat. In Greece, such a flatbread is traditionally sprinkled with sesame seeds.

For extra softness, add 1 tablespoon of yogurt to the dough.

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1½ cups (190 g) all-purpose flour
- ½ cup (120 ml) warm water
- 1 tsp. instant yeast/ ½ tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ cup (4 Tbsp. / 60 ml) olive oil (divided)
- 3 Tbsp. za'atar spice blend

HOW TO COOK:

1. In a bowl, combine the all-purpose flour, yeast, salt, and warm water. Knead until a soft dough forms. It usually takes 5 minutes. Cover and let stand for 30 minutes.
2. Divide the dough into 4 parts. Roll each part into a thin circle (about 6 inches/15 cm in diameter). For crispier tortillas, roll out the dough thinner.
3. Mix za'atar with two tablespoons of olive oil. Spread evenly over each tortilla. Instead of zaatar, you can use a mixture of dried thyme, sesame seeds, and sumac.
4. Bake or pan fry:
5. Oven: preheat to 400°F (200°C). Bake on a lined baking tray for 8 - 10 minutes until golden.
6. Stovetop: Heat a cast iron skillet over medium heat. Cook each tortilla for 2 - 3 minutes on each side until golden.
7. Drizzle tortillas with olive oil, if desired, and enjoy warm.
8. Store in an airtight container for up to 2 days or freeze for up to 3 months.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 210, Carbs: 24 g, Chol: 0 mg, Sodium: 290 mg, Fats: 10 g, Saturated Fats: 1,5 g, Protein: 4, Fiber: 2 g, Sugars: 0 g, Potassium: 75 mg

MEDITERRANEAN-INSPIRED BUDDHA BOWL



To make a simple tahini dressing, whisk together 2 Tbsp. tahini, 1 Tbsp. lemon juice, 1 Tbsp. water, and a pinch of salt. Instead of the tahini dressing, you can simply drizzle the dish with a lemon vinaigrette made with olive oil, lemon juice, and herbs.

You can use grilled chicken, chickpeas, or halloumi cheese instead of falafel.

Servings: 2

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 8 oz. (225 g) Falafel (pre-made or homemade)
- 1 medium eggplant, sliced into ½ inch (1 cm) thick slices
- 5 oz. (140 g) mixed Greens (arugula, lettuce, etc.)

- ½ cup (85 g) olives (Kalamata or green)
- 1 cup (150 g) cherry tomatoes, halved
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- salt and pepper to taste
- (Optional) tahini dressing (for drizzling)

HOW TO COOK:

1. Sprinkle both sides of the eggplant slices with olive oil, salt, and pepper.
2. Heat a grill pan or outdoor grill. Grill the eggplant slices for 5-7 minutes on each side or until soft and lightly charred. To get nice grill marks on the eggplant, make sure the grill pan is heated before adding the slices.
3. If you are using pre-made falafel, follow the directions on the package. Warm falafel creates a delightful contrast with fresh herbs and tomatoes.
4. Divide the mixed greens between two bowls. Arrange the grilled eggplant slices, cherry tomatoes, olives, and falafel on top of the greens.
5. Drizzle with tahini dressing (if using) and serve immediately.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 450, Carbs: 45 g, Chol: 0 mg, Sodium: 600 mg, Fats: 25 g, Saturated Fats: 3 g, Protein: 15, Fiber: 10 g, Sugars: 8 g, Potassium: 800 mg

SHAKSHUKA



You can give this classic Spanish breakfast a protein-packed upgrade by adding chickpeas or crumbled feta. Want more spice? Add cumin or red pepper flakes. Feel free to substitute bell peppers with zucchini or eggplant.

Servings: 2

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Cook Time: 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 can (14 oz. / 400 g) crushed tomatoes
- 1 small onion (50 g), finely chopped

- 1 red bell pepper (150 g), diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 4 large eggs
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Heat the olive oil in a large skillet. Add sliced onion and bell pepper. Cook for about 5 minutes until softened.
2. Add garlic to the skillet and fry for a minute, stirring constantly. Add tomatoes, salt, and pepper, and braise for 5 minutes.
3. Make 4 small wells in the sauce and gently scramble an egg into each. Cover and cook for 5 minutes until the egg whites have set and the yolks are slightly runny.
4. Sprinkle with fresh herbs (optional) and serve warm with a crust of bread or pita bread.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 230, Carbs: 18 g, Chol: 370 mg, Sodium: 350 mg, Fats: 14 g, Saturated Fats: 3 g, Protein: 13, Fiber: 4 g, Sugars: 9 g, Potassium: 600 mg

LABNEH WITH OLIVE OIL & HERBS



Traditionally, za'atar can be substituted for sumac or cumin. A handful of toasted pine nuts / walnuts will give the labneh a crunch and texture.

Store the labneh in the refrigerator for up to five days.

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 5 minutes (plus 12-24 hours draining time)

Cook Time: 0 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups (500 g) full-fat plain yogurt/ Greek yogurt
- ½ tsp. salt
- 2 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup (35 g) mixed olives, chopped
- 1 tsp za'atar / dried oregano
- Black pepper, to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Cover a sieve with gauze and place it over a bowl. Mix the yogurt with salt. Pour into the cloth. Cover and put it in the refrigerator for 12-24 hours to allow the yogurt to become thick and creamy.
2. Transfer the labneh to a serving bowl. Run a spoon across the surface.
3. Drizzle with extra virgin olive oil. Sprinkle with za'atar, chopped olives, and black pepper.
4. Enjoy with pita bread, fresh veggies, or as a spread!

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 170, Carbs: 6 g, Chol: 10 mg, Sodium: 320 mg, Fats: 14 g, Saturated Fats: 3 g, Protein: 7, Fiber: 1 g, Sugars: 5 g, Potassium: 210 mg

GREEK SEMOLINA PORRIDGE (HALVÀ ME SIMIGDÁLI)



If you like a richer texture, use heavy cream instead of milk. And for a dairy-free version, substitute with almond or oat milk. A pinch of vanilla extract or orange zest will add flavor.

This creamy semolina is delicious with toasted nuts, raisins, Greek yogurt, or a scoop of ice cream.

Servings: 2

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Cook Time: 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- ½ cup (80 g) semolina
- 2 cups (500 ml) milk (or water for a lighter version)
- 2 Tbsp. honey / sugar
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 1 Tbsp. butter / olive oil (*optional, for richness*)

HOW TO COOK:

1. In a saucepan, melt the butter (if using) over medium heat and fry the semolina for 2-3 minutes until golden and fragrant.
2. Slowly pour in the milk and salt, stirring constantly to prevent lumps from forming.
3. Cook for 5 - 7 minutes, stirring frequently, until thick and creamy.
4. After cooking, add honey and cinnamon.
5. Serve warm, sprinkled with cinnamon, nuts, or dried fruit as desired.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 250, Carbs: 40 g, Chol: 10 mg, Sodium: 100 mg, Fats: 6 g, Saturated Fats: 3 g, Protein: 7, Fiber: 2 g, Sugars: 2 g, Potassium: 200 mg

GREEK CHICKEN PITA



For vegetarians, replace the chicken with roasted halloumi, chickpeas, feta cheese, and pitted olives.

Add hummus, tzatziki, or tahini sauce to give the dish a Mediterranean flavor. If you have time, you can make a sauce from yogurt, lemon juice, fresh oregano, black pepper, and olive oil.

Servings: 2

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 0 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 pita breads

- 1 chicken breast, grilled or roasted
- ½ cucumber, sliced
- 1 small tomato, sliced
- ¼ small red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Warm the pita and cut it in half to make pockets.
2. Stuff each pita half with cooked chicken, cucumber, tomato, and red onion.
3. Enjoy as is or drizzle with tzatziki or a squeeze of lemon for extra flavor.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 350, Carbs: 35 g, Chol: 55 mg, Sodium: 400 mg, Fats: 10 g, Saturated Fats: 2 g, Protein: 30 g, Fiber: 4 g, Sugars: 5 g, Potassium: 550 mg

VIBRANT SALADS, SOUPS & SMALL PLATES

TABBOULEH



Fresh herbs are essential for the vibrant flavor of tabbouleh. Do not replace it with dried herbs. Add lemon juice for a more traditional tabbouleh flavor. In the winter, I substitute tomatoes for pomegranate seeds, and it turns out delicious, too.

Substitute bulgur wheat for quinoa for a gluten-free option.

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup (180 g) bulgur wheat (fine or medium), cooked
- 2 medium tomatoes, diced
- 1 cucumber, diced
- ½ cup (packed) fresh parsley, finely chopped
- ¼ cup (packed) fresh mint, finely chopped
- ¼ cup (60 ml) extra virgin olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Combine the cooked bulgur, diced tomatoes, cucumber, parsley, and mint. Do not use curly parsley, as its flavor is much stronger.
2. Season generously with salt and pepper. Add olive oil and stir until the tabbouleh has a shiny appearance, indicating enough oil.
3. For the best flavor, cover the tabbouleh with a lid and refrigerate it for at least 30 minutes before serving.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 220, Carbs: 32 g, Fats: 9 g, Chol: 0 mg, Sodium 120 mg, Protein: 5 g, Fiber: 7 g, Sugars: 4 g, Potassium: 300 mg

GREEK VILLAGE SALAD (HORIATIKI)



To make the tardy dressing for the Horiatiiki salad, mix 1 tbsp. olive oil, ½ Tbsp. red wine vinegar (or lemon juice), ¼ tsp. dried oregano, salt, and pepper to taste. For a spicier flavor, add a crushed garlic clove.

A hard-boiled egg goes well with the vegetables and will make the salad heartier.

Servings: 2

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 0 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 medium tomatoes, chopped
- ½ cucumber, sliced
- ¼ small red onion, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup (40 g) black olives, pitted
- ¼ cup (40 g) feta cheese, cubed
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Combine the chopped tomatoes, cucumber, onion, olives, and feta cheese.
2. Add olive oil, salt, and black pepper to taste.
3. Serve immediately and enjoy!

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 220, Carbs: 9 g, Fats: 18 g, Saturated Fats: 5 g, Chol: 25 mg, Sodium: 500 mg, Protein: 6 g, Fiber: 3 g, Sugars: 5 g, Potassium: 400 mg

SIMPLE FATTOUSH (CRISPY PITA SALAD)



You can never ever go wrong adding a simple dressing of $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 g) Greek yogurt, 1 Tbsp. lemon juice, 1 Tbsp. olive oil, 1 minced garlic clove, salt, and black pepper to taste. Yogurt can be substituted for the tahini. Use romaine or arugula for extra greens.

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 5 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 pita breads, toasted or baked until crisp
- 2 cups (300 g) cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 cup (150 g) cucumber, chopped
- ½ cup (75 g) radishes, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 3 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Cut the pita into slices and toast on a dry griddle or in the oven at 350°F (180°C) for 5 minutes until golden and crispy.
2. Combine the cucumber, halved cherry tomatoes, radishes, and parsley.
3. Add olive oil, salt, and pepper, and mix gently.
4. Just before serving, add the crispy pita slices to preserve their crunch.
5. Serve immediately and enjoy!

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 220, Carbs: 25 g, Fats: 11 g, Saturated Fats: 1.5 g, Chol: 0 mg, Sodium: 250 mg, Protein: 5 g, Fiber: 3 g, Sugars: 4 g, Potassium: 300 mg

GRILLED ZUCCHINI SALAD



Don't have a grill? - Bake zucchini in the oven at 425°F (220°C) for 15 minutes, flipping halfway through.

Sprinkle with toasted pine nuts or almonds for crunch. Red pepper flakes or balsamic glaze will add spice.

Servings: 2

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 medium zucchinis (approx. 10 oz. / 280 g total)
- ½ cup (2 oz. / 60 g) feta cheese/ soft goat cheese / ricotta, crumbled
- ¼ cup fresh parsley leaves/ mint/ basil, chopped
- 2 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 2 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Slice zucchini into ¼-inch (0.6 cm) thick circles or long strips.
2. Heat a grill or grill pan. Coat the zucchini slices with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Grill for 3 - 5 minutes on each side until soft and lightly charred.
3. Transfer the grilled zucchini to a plate. Drizzle with lemon juice and the remaining tablespoon of olive oil.
4. Sprinkle with crumbled feta and chopped parsley.
5. Enjoy warm or at room temperature.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 223, Carbs: 7 g, Fats: 19 g, Saturated Fats: 5 g, Chol: 17 mg, Sodium: 260 mg, Protein: 5 g, Fiber: 2 g, Sugars: 4 g, Potassium: 400 mg

BEETROOT ORANGE SALAD



This salad combines sweet and salty flavors. The citrus notes of oranges contrast beautifully with the natural sweetness of beetroot. And the addition of ingredients such as nuts, cheese, and tart dressing enhances the complexity of the flavor. Both beets and oranges are rich in vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants, making this salad not only delicious but nutritious.

Servings: 2-3

Prep Time: 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 3 medium beetroots, boiled or roasted, peeled, and cubed
- 2 large oranges, peeled and segmented

- ¼ cup (40 g) pistachios/pine nuts, toasted and roughly chopped
- 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar
- a bunch of arugula
- Salt and pepper, to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Arrange the beet slices, orange slices, and arugula on a serving platter. Sprinkle the toasted pistachios or pine nuts on top.
2. Mix olive oil, balsamic vinegar, pepper, and salt until smooth.
3. Pour the savory dressing over the salad before serving.
4. Serve immediately and enjoy!

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 274, Carbs: 16.4 g, Fats: 19.1 g, Cholesterol 26 mg, Sodium 188 mg, Protein: 11.5 g, Fiber: 3.7 g, Sugars: 12.2 g

SHRIMP, AVOCADO & GRAPEFRUIT SALAD



Salad with shrimp, grapefruit, and avocado is not a traditional Mediterranean dish, but its spirit and ingredients are quite in line with the principles of the Mediterranean diet. Let this salad be your little escape to lemon groves and harbor cafes, where life flows slowly and flavor is everything.

Try adding some honey to balance out the grapefruit. If you don't like shrimp, use fried scallops or canned tuna in flakes. Adding quinoa, farro, or a handful of chickpeas to the salad will make it a complete meal.

Servings: 2

Prep Time: 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 8 oz. (225 g) cooked large shrimp, peeled and deveined (tails optional)
- 1 ripe avocado, sliced
- 1 ruby red grapefruit/ orange / blood orange, peeled and segmented
- ¼ small red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 cup (30 g) arugula or baby greens
- 1 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Carefully cut the peel and white core off the grapefruit, then cut the segments over a bowl to collect the juice. Set aside.
2. Arrange the avocado slices, grapefruit segments, shrimp, arugula, and red onion on a serving platter or in a bowl.
3. Drizzle with olive oil and grapefruit juice. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
4. Serve immediately with a lemon slice if you like citrus notes.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 285, Carbs: 12 g, Fats: 18 g, Saturated Fat: 3 g, Cholesterol: 170 mg, Sodium: 380 mg, Protein: 20 g, Fiber: 5 g, Sugars: 6 g, Potassium: 680 mg

BABA GHANOUSH



Baba ghanoush is a famous Lebanese dip where the main ingredient is roasted or fire-cooked eggplant. In its own way, it is a kind of classical chickpea hummus. You can also make hummus with avocado, pumpkin, peanuts, beets, or sweet potatoes. Find your favorite combination of spices and lemon juice.

If you can find smoked garlic, add it to the fresh; it's a nice addition as well (as is smoked paprika!).

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 40 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 medium eggplant (1 lb./450 g)
- 1 Tbsp. sesame oil
- 2 Tbsp. tahini
- 2 tsp. lemon juice
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled
- 1/8 tsp. salt
- 1/8 tsp. ground nutmeg

HOW TO COOK:

1. Preheat your oven to 425°F (220°C).
2. Wrap the garlic cloves in aluminum foil.
3. Poke the eggplant skin with the fork a few times and wrap it as well.
4. Roast the foil-wrapped garlic in the oven for 15 minutes and the eggplant for 40 minutes.
5. Let the eggplant cool, then peel and chop. Let it drain for 5 minutes.
6. Add the chopped eggplant, roasted garlic cloves, tahini, lemon juice, salt, sesame oil, and nutmeg to the food processor and puree them.
7. Transfer eggplant puree to a serving bowl and serve with pita, carrot sticks, or bell pepper wedges.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 111, Carbs: 8.5 g, Fats: 7.6 g, Chol: 0 mg, Sodium 13 mg, Protein: 2.4 g, Fiber: 4.7 g, Sugars: 3.7 g

MUHAMMARA (RED PEPPER & WALNUT DIP)



Grilling bell peppers brings out smokiness, a flavor that pairs well with toasted nuts and smoked paprika. Feel free to try this option! If you want it spicier, try adding $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon red pepper flakes or 1 teaspoon harissa.

If you can't find pomegranate molasses, use a mixture of honey and lemon juice.

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 large red bell peppers (300 g)
- ½ cup (60 g) walnuts/ almonds/ pecans, toasted
- 2 Tbsp. (30 g) pomegranate molasses
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- ½ tsp. ground cumin
- 3 Tbsp. (45 ml) extra virgin olive oil
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F (220°C).
2. Place the raw bell peppers on a baking sheet and roast for 15 - 18 minutes, turning halfway through, until the skins are charred.
3. Place them in a bowl, cover them, and let them steam for 5 minutes. Peel and remove seeds.
4. In a food processor, combine the prepared bell peppers, walnuts, pomegranate molasses, garlic, and cumin. Whisk with a blender until smooth but light in texture.
5. Keep whisking and slowly add the oil.
6. Add salt and black pepper to taste.
7. Transfer the Muhammara to a bowl, drizzle with olive oil, and garnish with walnuts or pomegranate seeds if desired.
8. Serve with pita, vegetables, or grilled meat.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 180, Carbs: 10 g, Fats: 15 g, Saturated Fats: 1.5 g, Chol: 0 mg, Sodium 120 mg, Protein: 3 g, Fiber: 2 g, Sugars: 5 g, Potassium: 250 mg

RED LENTIL SOUP (MERCIMEK ÇORBASI)



This is an adaptation of the comforting, protein-packed Turkish classic, which usually has potatoes and a little paprika for spice. Carrots can be substituted for sweet potatoes. Coconut milk or yogurt adds creaminess and freshly squeezed lemon juice brightens the flavor.

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 25 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup (190 g) red lentils
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 medium carrot, chopped
- 4 cups (960 ml) vegetable broth or water
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- Salt & pepper to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Heat the olive oil in a saucepan. Add onions and carrots and cook for 5 minutes until softened.
2. Add red lentils, cumin, salt, and pepper. Pour in the broth (or water).
3. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and cook for 20 minutes.
4. Whisk the soup with an immersion blender for a smooth texture. For a more rustic flavor, leave it crumbly.
5. Taste for flavor and add seasonings. Drizzle with olive oil or lemon juice(optional).

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 230, Carbs: 30 g, Fats: 8 g, Saturated Fats: 1 g, Chol: 0 mg, Sodium 480 mg, Protein: 9 g, Fiber: 7 g, Sugars: 4 g, Potassium: 400 mg

CHICKPEA & TOMATO STEW



There are countless ways to enhance this vegetable stew - add cumin, smoked paprika, or chili flakes for spiciness, substitute zucchini for bell peppers or eggplant, and add a spoonful of tahini or coconut milk for creaminess.

Add parsley or basil for a fresh garnish.

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 25 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 can (15 oz / 400 g) chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 1 can (14 oz / 400 g) diced tomatoes
- 1 zucchini, chopped
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- Salt & pepper to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan. Add onion and cook for 3-4 minutes until soft. Then add garlic and cook for a minute, stirring constantly.
2. Add the chopped zucchini and cook for 5 minutes until slightly softened.
3. Pour in the diced tomatoes and chickpeas. Season with salt and pepper. Braise for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.
4. Taste for flavor and adjust seasonings. Serve warm with couscous, rice, or bread.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 250, Carbs: 35 g, Fats: 8 g, Saturated Fats: 1 g, Chol: 0 mg, Sodium 480 mg, Protein: 9 g, Fiber: 9 g, Sugars: 7 g, Potassium: 600 mg

GREEK LEMON CHICKEN SOUP (AVGOLEMONO)



Make the soup richer in micronutrients by adding diced carrots or celery to the broth. Or lighten it up by using cauliflower rice instead of regular rice. Vegetarians can substitute chicken for chickpeas.

For a creamier texture, whisk some of the soup with a blender before adding the eggs.

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 25 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 cups (1 liter) chicken broth

- ½ cup (85 g) uncooked rice or orzo
- 2 eggs
- Juice of 1 large lemon (about ¼ cup / 60 ml)
- 1 cup (150 g) cooked, shredded chicken
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- Salt & pepper to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Bring the chicken broth to a boil in a large saucepan. Add the rice / orzo and cook until tender (10-12 minutes). Reduce heat to low.
2. Whisk eggs and lemon juice until smooth.
3. Slowly add a cup of the hot broth to the egg mixture, whisking constantly to prevent scrambling.
4. Add the egg mixture to the soup. Add shredded chicken and olive oil. Heat, without bringing to a boil, for 2-3 minutes.
5. Add salt and pepper to taste. Serve warm, sprinkled with fresh parsley or lemon slices, if desired.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 220, Carbs: 18 g, Fats: 8 g, Saturated Fats: 2 g, Chol: 120 mg, Sodium 700 mg, Protein: 18 g, Fiber: 0.5 g, Sugars: 1 g, Potassium: 280 mg

HEARTY VEGETARIAN & PLANT-BASED

ROASTED PEPPERS



A little balsamic vinegar will give it a richer flavor. Crumbled feta or olives will make the dish heartier. If you're short on time, use pre-roasted peppers in a jar (rinse before using).

Serve as a meze, on toast, or alongside grilled meat or fish.

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 large red and yellow bell peppers
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 Tbsp. (30 ml) extra virgin olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. lemon/ lime juice
- 1 tsp. dried oregano/ fresh basil/ thyme / rosemary
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Preheat the broiler (grill) in the oven until hot.
2. Arrange whole peppers on a baking sheet and roast for 15 - 20 minutes, turning every 5 minutes, until charred and blistered.
3. You can also roast over an open flame on a gas stove or grill for a smoky flavor.
4. Place the peppers in a bowl and cover with a plate or place in an airtight bag for 15 minutes.
5. Peel, remove the skin, remove the seeds, and cut it into strips.
6. Arrange the strips of pepper on a plate.
7. Sprinkle with minced garlic, oregano, salt, and pepper.
8. Drizzle with olive oil and lemon juice.
9. Serve warm or chilled.

NUTRITIONAL FACTS/INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 88, Carbs: 7 g, Protein: 1 g, Fats: 7 g, Saturated Fats: 1 g, Cholesterol: 0 mg,
Sodium: 40 mg, Fiber: 2 g, Sugars: 4 g, Potassium: 210 mg

EGGPLANT ROLLS WITH WALNUTS & GARLIC



To remove the bitterness from eggplants, sprinkle the raw slices with salt. After 15 minutes, rinse them and pat dry. Instead of baking, grill the eggplant slices for a smoky flavor. Add crumbled feta or ricotta to the nut filling.

Serve chilled or at room temperature with a drizzle of pomegranate molasses.

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 medium eggplants (aubergines), sliced lengthwise (about ¼ inch / 0.5 cm thick)
- ¾ cup (90 g) walnuts, finely ground/ sunflower seeds / chickpeas
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil, plus more for brushing
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C).
2. Coat the eggplant slices on both sides with olive oil. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
3. Place them on a baking sheet and roast for 15-20 minutes until soft and golden, flipping halfway through. Allow to cool slightly.
4. In a bowl, combine the finely ground walnuts, chopped garlic, lemon juice, and one tablespoon of olive oil. Mix well, aiming for a thick paste.
5. Place a small spoonful of the nut mixture on one end of each eggplant slice and roll up tightly.
6. Serve rolls on a plate with a drizzle of olive oil. Garnish with parsley or walnuts if desired.

NUTRITIONAL FACTS/INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 221, Carbs: 9 g, Protein: 4 g, Fats: 19 g, Saturated Fats: 2 g, Cholesterol: 0 mg, Sodium: 40 mg, Fiber: 3 g, Sugars: 2 g, Potassium: 360 mg

ROASTED CAULIFLOWER WITH TAHINI SAUCE



Fans of spicy flavor can add smoked paprika or chili flakes. And add garlic and fresh herbs to the tahini sauce. If you don't like tahini, Greek yogurt with lemon juice as a sauce works great.

Garnish with toasted sesame seeds or chopped parsley for extra flavor.

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 25 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 medium head of cauliflower, cut into florets

- ½ tsp. ground cumin
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil
- ¼ cup (60 ml) tahini
- 2 Tbsp. lemon juice
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F (220°C). Mix the cauliflower florets with olive oil, cumin, salt, and black pepper.
2. Arrange the seasoned cauliflower florets on a baking sheet in a single layer. Roast them for 20 - 25 minutes, turning halfway through, until golden and lightly crisp. Fry at a high temperature, and do not overcrowd the pan for the best texture.
3. Whisk lemon juice, tahini, and 2 tbsp. water until smooth. Add more water if necessary.
4. Serve the roasted cauliflower with tahini sauce, and enjoy!

NUTRITIONAL FACTS/INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 180, Carbs: 10 g, Protein: 4 g, Fats: 14 g, Saturated Fats: 2 g, Cholesterol: 0 mg, Sodium: 60 mg, Fiber: 3 g, Sugars: 2 g, Potassium: 350 mg

STUFFED BELL PEPPERS WITH RICE



Ripe sweet tomatoes are always good, but you can substitute them or add sautéed onions for a mild sweetness. Chickpeas or lentils will add heartiness to the dish.

Just before serving, add lemon juice and sprinkle crumbled feta or yogurt on top.

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 40 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 large bell peppers (any color), short and wide
- 1 cup (200 g) long-grain rice/ quinoa / bulgur, cooked
- ¼ cup (4 Tbsp.) olive oil
- ½ cup fresh parsley and mint, chopped
- 1 medium tomato, finely diced
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C). Cut off the tops of the bell peppers, set aside, and remove the core and seeds.
2. In a bowl, combine the diced tomato, cooked rice, chopped herbs, 2 tbsp olive oil, salt, and black pepper.
3. Fill each pepper with the tomato-rice mixture and arrange them vertically in a baking dish. Drizzle with the remaining olive oil.
4. Bake it covered with foil for 30 minutes. Uncover and bake for 10 minutes until the peppers are soft.
5. Allow to cool slightly before serving.

NUTRITIONAL FACTS/INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 260, Carbs: 36 g, Protein: 4 g, Fats: 11 g, Saturated Fats: 1.5 g, Cholesterol: 0 mg, Sodium: 10 mg, Fiber: 4 g, Sugars: 5 g, Potassium: 400 mg

STUFFED GRAPE LEAVES (DOLMA)



Fans of stuffed vegetables will love this Ottoman dolma. You can use whatever greens you have on hand and finish the dish up. For a heartier dish, replace some of the rice with cooked quinoa, ground beef, or lamb. Serve with Greek yogurt or tzatziki.

Servings: 6

Prep Time: 55 minutes

Cook Time: 90 minutes

Chill Time: 1 hour

INGREDIENTS:

- 50 grape leaves (jarred or fresh)

- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 1 cup (150 g) uncooked rice
- ½ cup (50 g) pine nuts
- 1 lemon, juiced
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Blanch fresh grape leaves in boiling salted water for 5-7 minutes, then drain and allow them to cool.
2. If you are using canned leaves, rinse them thoroughly to remove excess brine.
3. Heat 1 Tbsp. olive oil in a skillet and fry the sliced onion until soft.
4. Add the uncooked rice and stir for 3 minutes.
5. Pour in 1¾ cups (40 tbsp) of water and cook over low heat until the rice has absorbed most of the liquid.
6. Add pine nuts, lemon juice, salt, and pepper. Allow the stuffing to cool.
7. Place a grape leaf shiny side down, base toward you. Add one teaspoon of stuffing near the base. Fold in the sides, then roll into a small cylinder. Repeat with the remaining leaves.
8. Arrange the dolma in the pan in circular layers tightly together.
9. Drizzle with 2 Tbsp. olive oil and add ¾ cup (180 ml) water. Cover with a lid or heatproof plate to prevent unraveling.
10. Braise over low heat for 1 hour.
11. Chill in the refrigerator for at least 1-1.5 hours before serving.

NUTRITIONAL FACTS/INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 210, Carbs: 30 g, Protein: 4 g, Fats: 8 g, Saturated Fats: 1 g, Cholesterol: 0 mg,
Sodium: 100 mg, Fiber: 3 g, Sugars: 2 g, Potassium: 150 mg

ZUCCHINI FRITTERS WITH YOGURT DIP



You can make a simple yogurt dressing by mixing $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (120 g) Greek yogurt, 1 tbsp lemon juice, and 1 small chopped garlic clove. The fritters can be baked in the oven at 400°F (200°C) for 15 - 20 minutes, flipping halfway through.

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 medium zucchini (~1 lb. / 450 g), grated
- 2 eggs, beaten

- ½ cup (60 g) flour (all-purpose or whole wheat)
- ¼ cup (30 g) crumbled feta cheese
- 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh dill
- Olive oil, for frying
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Place the grated zucchini in a kitchen towel and squeeze out as much liquid as possible.
2. In a bowl, mix the zucchini, eggs, flour, feta, dill, salt, and pepper until smooth.
3. Heat olive oil in a skillet for a few minutes.
4. Spoon the batter onto the pan. Fry the fritters until golden brown, 3-4 minutes on each side.
5. Transfer to a plate lined with paper towels.
6. Enjoy warm fritters with a refreshing yogurt dressing!

NUTRITIONAL FACTS/INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 180, Carbs: 15 g, Protein: 9 g, Fats: 9 g, Saturated Fats: 3 g, Cholesterol: 90 mg, Sodium: 290 mg, Fiber: 2 g, Sugars: 3 g, Potassium: 340 mg

BULGUR PILAF



Bulgur pilaf couldn't be easy to make. You can give it a protein-packed upgrade by adding chickpeas or lentils. Or use different grains (quinoa or couscous) if the bulgur is unavailable.

Stir in fresh parsley, mint, or a squeeze of lemon before serving.

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Cook Time: 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup (180 g) bulgur wheat (medium or coarse)

- 1½ cups (360 ml) vegetable broth (or water)
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 1 medium tomato, diced
- 1 medium green bell pepper, diced
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Heat the olive oil in a skillet. Add onion and cook for 3 - 4 minutes until soft and translucent.
2. Add the diced tomato and bell pepper and cook for another 2 minutes.
3. Add the bulgur, broth, salt, and pepper.
4. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and cover the skillet. Simmer for 10-12 minutes until liquid is absorbed.
5. Remove from heat and let rest for 5 minutes.
6. Stir with a fork and serve warmly.

NUTRITIONAL FACTS/INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 180, Carbs: 30 g, Protein: 5 g, Fats: 6 g, Saturated Fats: 1 g, Cholesterol: 0 mg,
Sodium: 320 mg, Fiber: 5 g, Sugars: 3 g, Potassium: 250 mg

GREEK SPANAKOPITA



Spanakopita is a popular vegetarian dish. Its main ingredients - spinach, feta cheese, onions or scallions, and eggs - make it a hearty and nutritious dish. Additional herbs such as dill, parsley, or mint can be added to the filling, or nutmeg for extra flavor. Spinach provides vitamins A, C, and K, iron, magnesium, and dietary fiber. Feta cheese adds calcium and protein.

Servings: 2 - 3

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 35 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 7 oz. (200 g) fresh spinach, chopped
- 1 cup (30 g) fresh parsley, chopped
- 6 oz. (175 g) sun-dried tomatoes with oil, chopped
- 4 oz. (100 g) feta cheese
- 2 whole eggs
- 5 oz. (125 g) filo pastry

HOW TO COOK:

1. Fill a large saucepan with water and bring it to a boil.
2. Add spinach and cook for 2 minutes. Remove from the sieve, leave it to cool slightly, then squeeze out the excess water.
3. Mix the spinach, parsley, feta, and eggs in a bowl.
4. Roll out the phyllo pastry. Brush it with the oil from the sun-dried tomato jar.
5. Place it oil side down in a 9-inch (22 cm) pie dish so that part of the dough hangs over the side. Oil the next piece of the pastry and place it in the dish. Continue placing the oiled pieces of pastry into the dish until you have three layers.
6. Spread the filling over the dough.
7. Pull the dough from the edges to the center and pinch, covering the filling. Brush the top with oil.
8. Preheat the oven to 360°F (180°C). Cook for 30 mins until golden brown.
9. Remove the pie from the baking dish, slice it into wedges, and serve with seasonal salad.

NUTRITIONAL FACTS/INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 264, Carbs: 26.8 g, Protein: 14.9 g, Fats: 11.5 g, Cholesterol: 208 mg, Sodium: 542 mg, Fiber: 2.5 g, Sugars: 3 g

SEAFOOD & PROTEIN-PACKED MEALS

GRILLED BABY SQUID WITH LEMON & THYME



If you don't have lemon thyme, substitute regular thyme and add a little more lemon juice. A pinch of chili flakes / smoked paprika adds extra spice.

Serve with a fresh Mediterranean salad or grilled vegetables.

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 5 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1.75 lb. (800 g) baby squid, cleaned
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 4 sprigs lemon thyme / regular thyme
- 2 Tbsp. lemon juice (30 ml)
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil (30 ml)
- Salt, to taste
- Black pepper, to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. In a bowl, mix the cleaned and dried baby squid with olive oil, minced garlic, and thyme leaves. Season with salt and black pepper.
2. Preheat a grill or griddle pan over high heat.
3. Grill the squid for 2 to 3 minutes, turning once, until lightly charred and tender.
4. Drizzle with fresh lemon juice before serving. Serve immediately.

NUTRITIONAL FACTS/INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 190, Carbs: 3 g, Protein: 39 g, Fats: 9 g, Saturated Fats: 1.5 g, Cholesterol: 240 mg, Sodium: 310 mg, Fiber: 0 g, Sugars: 0 g, Potassium: 440 mg

SHRIMP STEW



If you don't have lemon thyme, substitute regular thyme and add a little more lemon juice. Chili flakes or smoked paprika will add some spice.

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 lb. (450 g) shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 medium zucchini, diced

- 1 can (14.5 oz / 400 g) diced tomatoes
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp. dried oregano
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- Salt and pepper, to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Heat the olive oil in a large skillet. Add garlic and cook for about one minute until fragrant.
2. Add zucchini and cook for 5 minutes until slightly tender.
3. Pour in the diced tomatoes along with the juice, and add the oregano, salt, and pepper. Simmer for 10 minutes.
4. Add the prepared shrimp and cook for another 5 minutes or until they are pink and opaque.
5. Taste and add more seasoning if necessary. Serve warm.

NUTRITIONAL FACTS/INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 220, Carbs: 12 g, Protein: 24 g, Fats: 10 g, Saturated Fats: 1.5 g, Cholesterol: 180 mg, Sodium: 400 mg, Fiber: 3 g, Sugars: 5 g, Potassium: 600 mg

GRILLED OCTOPUS WITH VEGETABLES



There is something eternal in the aroma of octopus sizzling on an open fire - the whisper of the sea on the breeze mingles with the smoky sweetness of charred vegetables. This is the kind of dish that doesn't require much - just quality ingredients, fire, and time. Feel free to add other vegetables to the grill, such as zucchini or eggplant. Experiment with different fresh herbs (thyme or marjoram). Add lemon zest to the olive oil for vegetables for extra flavor.

Whether served warm with a crust of bread or chilled with a glass of white wine, this recipe allows you to slow down and enjoy the moment - to eat like you're on vacation, even if it's just one meal.

Servings: 2

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 8-15 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 octopus tentacles (1 lb. / 450 g total), pre-cooked and tenderized
- 1 small red bell pepper, cut into chunks
- 1/2 red onion, cut into wedges
- 2 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil (plus more for drizzling)
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- 1 lemon, cut into wedges (for serving)

HOW TO COOK:

1. Pat the pre-boiled octopus tentacles dry. Coat them with a tablespoon of olive oil, salt, and pepper.
2. Preheat the grill over medium-high heat. Lightly oil the grill grates.
3. Place the red bell peppers and red onions on the grill. Grill for 5-7 minutes on each side or until slightly softened and charred. Add the cherry tomatoes to the grill in the last 2-3 minutes until they are lightly browned but have not lost their shape. Set the grilled vegetables aside for now.
4. Place the marinated octopus tentacles on the hot grill. Grill for 4-7 minutes on each side or until the tentacles are charred and slightly crispy.
5. Arrange the grilled vegetables on a plate and top with the grilled octopus tentacles. Drizzle with olive oil and garnish with fresh parsley or oregano if desired. Serve immediately with lemon wedges.

NUTRITIONAL FACTS/INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 350, Carbs: 12 g, Protein: 28 g, Fats: 22 g, Saturated Fats: 3 g, Cholesterol: 150 mg, Sodium: 250 mg, Fiber: 3 g, Sugars: 5 g, Potassium: 500 mg

LEMON & GARLIC FISH



Marinate the fish fillets in olive oil, garlic, and lemon juice for 15 minutes. For spiciness, add red pepper flakes or diced chili.

Combine with roasted vegetables, couscous, or a fresh Mediterranean salad.

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 white fish fillets (sea bass, cod, snapper) (1 lb. / 450 g)
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 lemon (juice + zest)
- 2 Tbsp. (30 ml) olive oil
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro /parsley/ basil / oregano, chopped
- Salt & black pepper, to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C) or heat a grill pan over medium heat.
2. Season the fish fillets with salt, pepper, lemon zest, and minced garlic. Drizzle with olive oil.
3. Oven: Place fish on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake for 12-15 minutes or until flaky.
4. Grill: Cook for 3-4 minutes on each side until opaque and flaky.
5. Sprinkle with fresh lemon juice and cilantro or parsley before serving.

NUTRITIONAL FACTS/INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 220, Carbs: 3 g, Protein: 25 g, Fats: 12 g, Saturated Fats: 2 g, Cholesterol: 70 mg, Sodium: 320 mg, Fiber: 1 g, Sugars: 1 g, Potassium: 500 mg

STUFFED SARDINES



Those who like a crispy crust can coat each fish in a mixture of breadcrumbs and a little lemon zest. You can also add chopped sun-dried tomatoes or capers to the filling.

Try grilling the sardines rather than baking or broiling to give them a smoky flavor.

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 8 fresh sardines, cleaned and butterflied

- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- ½ lemon, zest and juice
- 1 cup (150 g) ricotta
- ½ cup mint, chopped
- 2 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Preheat the oven or skillet: If baking, preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). If frying, heat a skillet over medium heat with 1 tbsp olive oil.
2. In a bowl, combine the chopped onion, ricotta, chopped mint, lemon juice and zest, salt, and pepper.
3. Take each sardine and place a little of the filling inside. Brush each fish with butter. Roll or twist the fish.
4. Place them in a greased baking dish or place them on a hot skillet.
5. Bake for 10 minutes or broil for 3 - 4 minutes on each side until golden and crispy.
6. Serve warm, drizzled with lemon juice, and garnished with cherry tomatoes or fresh salad.

NUTRITIONAL FACTS/INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 240, Carbs: 10 g, Protein: 18 g, Fats: 14 g, Saturated Fats: 3 g, Cholesterol: 50 mg, Sodium: 300 mg, Fiber: 1 g, Sugars: 1 g, Potassium: 250 mg

WHITE FISH STEW



During cooking, add a little white wine or lemon juice for more flavor. Sprinkle with red pepper flakes, or add chopped chilies for more spice.

Add ½ cup (120 ml) of vegetable broth to make the dish juicier.

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 fillets (1 lb. / 450 g) white fish (cod, sea bass, or halibut)

- 1 cup (150 g) cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 medium leek, sliced into rings
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ tsp. paprika
- 2 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat.
2. Sauté the leeks and garlic for 3 minutes until fragrant.
3. Add the cherry tomatoes and paprika, stirring, and cook for another 3 minutes until the tomatoes soften.
4. Season the fish with salt and pepper and place them in the skillet.
5. Cover and cook for 6-8 minutes.
6. Serve warm, sprinkled with fresh parsley, and garnished with rice or crusted bread.

NUTRITIONAL FACTS/INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 230, Carbs: 8 g, Protein: 25 g, Fats: 12 g, Saturated Fats: 2 g, Cholesterol: 55 mg, Sodium: 280 mg, Fiber: 2 g, Sugars: 3 g, Potassium: 500 mg

GRILLED MACKEREL WITH TOMATOES



This recipe was born out of a longing for the South: I closed my eyes and felt the sea breeze, wet feet after the sea, and the light cracking in the fire. It turned out to be a simple but hearty dinner with grilled fish and vegetables.

Garlic and herbs give the fish and tomatoes a wonderful flavor during cooking. If you like garlic, you can increase the amount a bit. A light drizzle of balsamic glaze after grilling will give the dish sweetness and sourness.

Servings: 2

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 8-12 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 whole mackerel, cleaned and gutted (about 6-8 oz. or 170-225 g each)
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes / 1 medium tomato, halved or sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 2 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. fresh oregano /thyme / basil / parsley
- Salt and black pepper to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Make 2-3 shallow diagonal incisions on each side of the fish.
2. Gently open the cavity of each mackerel. Divide half of the garlic and herbs and place them in the cavity of each fish. Arrange the halved or diced tomatoes on top of the mackerel. Sprinkle the tomatoes with the remaining garlic and herbs.
3. Drizzle the mackerel and tomatoes with olive oil. Season the fish with salt and pepper on both sides and the tomatoes on top. Make sure some of the seasoning gets into the cuts of the fish.
4. Preheat the grill pan or a grill over medium-high heat.
5. Oil the grill grates or a grill pan and place the prepared mackerel on the hot grill. Cook for 4-6 minutes on each side or until the skin is charred, the tomatoes are slightly softened, and the fish is cooked through and can be easily pierced with a fork. The internal temperature should reach 145°F (63°C). If you're concerned that tomatoes will fall through the grate, they can be placed in a small grill basket or directly on a piece of aluminum foil. Mackerel cooks quickly. Keep an eye on it to make sure you don't over-dry it.
6. Carefully remove the mackerel from the grill and serve immediately.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 380, Carbs: 8 g, Protein: 31 g, Fats: 26 g, Saturated Fats: 6 g, Cholesterol: 120 mg, Sodium: 110 mg, Fiber: 2 g, Sugars: 4 g, Potassium: 550 mg

BAKED COD WITH GOLDEN BREADCRUMB CRUST



I remembered the simple, no-frills baked fish served in seaside taverns. Use haddock, hake, or even halibut - any firm white fish will do just fine. Skip the parmesan and perhaps add a pinch of crushed almonds for heartiness.

If you want something crunchy and comforting, this recipe always helps. But if you want a bright flavor, add a spoonful of Dijon mustard under the breadcrumb crust or squeeze lemon juice on the fish before baking.

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 cod fillets (about 6 oz. (170 g) each)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (75 g) breadcrumbs (preferably panko for crunch)
- 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh parsley / 2 tsp. dried/ fresh basil/ oregano / thyme
- 2 Tbsp. grated Parmesan cheese (optional but divine)
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- Zest of 1 lemon
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Lightly oil the baking dish.
2. Season the cod fillets with salt and pepper. Place them in the prepared dish.
3. Combine the lemon zest, parsley, breadcrumbs, Parmesan (if using), and olive oil. Mix well so that the breadcrumbs are evenly coated and flavorful.
4. Gently spread the breadcrumb mixture over each cod fillet to form a crust.
5. Bake without the lid for 18-20 minutes until the cod can be pierced with a fork and the top is golden.
6. Garnish with chopped parsley and lemon wedges.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 275, Carbs: 7 g, Protein: 34 g, Fats: 12 g, Saturated Fats: 2.5 g, Cholesterol: 75 mg, Sodium: 280 mg, Fiber: 0.8 g, Sugars: 0.5 g, Potassium: 670 mg

GREEK LEMON CHICKEN SKEWERS



This recipe is a simplified version of your favorite Middle Eastern takeout dish. The secret to its mouthwatering flavor lies in the marinade. Every culinary culture has its own outstanding set of ingredients for marinating meat. My favorite recipe is based on yogurt, fresh or dried herbs, and spices, which help me make a great kebab every time.

Servings: 8

Prep Time: 10 minutes (plus 60 - 90 minutes for marinating)

Cook Time: 7-10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 lb. (900 g) chicken fillets, cut into bite-size cubes

- ⅔ cup (160 ml) Greek yogurt
- 1 Tbsp. dried thyme
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 4 minced garlic cloves/ 1 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. ground black pepper
- ½ lime, juiced

DIRECTIONS:

1. Combine Greek yogurt, olive oil, lime juice, dried thyme, salt, and minced garlic.
2. Marinate chicken pieces in the yogurt-spice mixture for 60–90 minutes.
3. Thread the chicken chunks onto skewers.
4. Preheat the grill.
5. Place the skewers on the grill and cook until golden brown, flipping occasionally.
6. Serve warm or cold, topped with chopped parsley. Chicken kebabs go well with garlic or tzatziki sauce.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 250, Carbs: 1.2 g, Fats: 13 g, Chol: 99 mg, Sodium 96 mg, Protein: 32.3 g, Fiber: 0.5 g, Sugar: 0.2 g

SAUTÉED LIVER WITH ONIONS AND HERBS



Let the simplicity of this dish transport you to the sun-drenched shores of the Mediterranean. Instead of lemon juice, you can drizzle a simple sauce of 3 tablespoons of vinegar, 1 tablespoon of Dijon mustard 1/2 cup (120 ml) of cream over the dish. Heat in the pan in which the liver was cooked for 1 minute.

Although the recipe uses chicken liver, you can also use veal or lamb liver. Cooking times should be adjusted accordingly: the veal liver is tender and cooks quickly, while lamb liver may take longer to cook.

Servings: 2

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 20-25 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 lb. (450 g) chicken liver, trimmed
- 2 medium yellow onions, thinly sliced
- 2 Tbsp. fresh oregano leaves/ sage/ dill/ parsley
- 2 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil (plus extra for cooking)
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- 4 lemon wedges

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a wide skillet, heat 1 Tbsp. olive oil over medium heat. Add onion and salt. Cook for 10 minutes until the onions are a deep golden-brown color. Stir occasionally. When the onions are soft and sweet, remove them from the skillet and set them aside.
2. Increase the heat to medium-high and add the remaining 1 Tbsp. olive oil to the same skillet. Generously sprinkle the dried chicken livers with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Lay out the livers in a single layer, avoiding overcrowding. Fry them for 2-3 minutes on each side until they are browned on the outside and cooked through on the inside. Remember that livers cook quickly; overcooking them loses their soft texture.
3. Return the caramelized onions to the skillet with the fried livers. Gently stir them together so that the sweet and savory notes intertwine. Sprinkle fresh oregano leaves on top.
4. Garnish with lemon wedges. Serve immediately with a crust of Mediterranean bread, a simple Greek salad, or roasted vegetables drizzled with olive oil.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 330, Carbs: 25 g, Fats: 18 g, Saturated Fat: 4 g, Chol: 450 mg, Sodium: 200 mg,
Protein: 28 g, Fiber: 3 g, Sugar: 10 g, Potassium: 380 mg

HARISSA SPICED CHICKEN



My instant ticket to warmer climes is a small jar of harissa in the fridge and a sense of culinary wanderlust. If you don't have harissa paste, don't feel bad. Use a mixture of smoked paprika, garlic, a pinch of chili flakes, and some tomato paste. If your harissa is very spicy, flavor it with honey or yogurt.

Serve this dish with fluffy couscous, roasted carrots, or even a simple cucumber-mint salad.

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 bone-in and skin-on chicken thighs (about 1¾ lb. / 800 g)
- 2 Tbsp. harissa paste
- 1 lemon, juiced
- 1 Tbsp. honey
- 1 red onion, thickly sliced
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C).
2. In a bowl, whisk together the harissa, lemon juice, honey, olive oil, salt, and pepper.
3. Rub the chicken thighs with the mixture. For extra flavor, lift the skin slightly to get the marinade underneath.
4. Arrange the chicken and onion slices in a baking dish.
5. Bake for 25 - 30 minutes until the chicken skin is golden and crispy (internal temperature should reach 165°F / 74°C).
6. Serve hot, sprinkling the pan juices on top.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 328, Carbs: 9 g, Fats: 20 g, Saturated Fat: 5 g, Chol: 110 mg, Sodium: 460 mg, Protein: 27 g, Fiber: 1 g, Sugar: 5 g, Potassium: 370 mg

MOROCCAN STYLE KEFTA



Tender meatballs, fragrant with warm spices and fresh herbs, slowly simmer in a rich tomato sauce that is both salty and sweet. Serve with a refreshing Moroccan salad of cucumbers, tomatoes, red onions, parsley, mint, lemon juice, and olive oil. Or with baked vegetables (green beans, broccoli, carrots, or zucchini).

Servings: 6

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 35 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 lb. (1 kg) ground lamb / beef meat

- 2 peeled tomatoes, chopped
- 2 onions, chopped
- 2 Tbsp. fresh parsley or coriander, chopped
- 1 tsp. paprika
- olive oil
- salt and pepper, to taste

DIRECTIONS:

1. Combine the onion, meat, parsley, olive oil, salt, and pepper in a bowl. Mix with your hands and set aside.
2. Put the tomatoes in a saucepan with a little salt, paprika, and olive oil. Cook for 30 minutes over low heat.
3. Meanwhile, form mince balls and fry them in a pan with a little oil for 15 minutes.
4. Place the meatballs in the tomato sauce and warm slightly.
5. Garnish them with fresh greens and serve with couscous, rice, or crusty bread.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 470, Carbs: 10 g, Fats: 32 g, Saturated Fats: 13 g, Chol: 110 mg, Sodium 150 mg, Protein: 32.3 g, Fiber: 2.5 g, Sugar: 5 g, Potassium: 450 mg

ROASTED LAMB SHOULDER



A timeless centerpiece with few ingredients, sprinkled with herbs and roasted to golden perfection. Shepherds roast lamb shoulder in a clay oven nestled on a hill, using only herbs, lemon, and olive oil - nothing else. "Lamb doesn't need fuss," they say as the aroma of garlic mingles with rosemary under the olive trees.

Inspired by his simplicity, I realized that slow roasting is the key to success. Allow time to do its work - the slow heat makes the fat more tender, soaking the meat from the inside out. Serve with baked potatoes, chickpea salad, or yogurt and tahini for contrast.

Servings: 6

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 2.5 to 3 hours (slow-roasted)

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 lb. (1.8 kg) boneless lamb shoulder, rolled and tied
- 4 garlic cloves, sliced
- 1 lemon, zested and juiced
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. dried oregano (or 1½ Tbsp. fresh)
- 3 sprigs fresh rosemary / 1 Tbsp. dried rosemary/ thyme / za'atar
- Salt and pepper, to taste

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 325°F (160°C).
2. Make small incisions all over the surface of the lamb and insert the garlic cloves inside.
3. Rub the lamb with olive oil, lemon zest, oregano, rosemary, salt, and pepper. Add the lemon juice at the end.
4. Place the lamb in a baking dish and cover loosely with foil.
5. Bake for 2.5-3 hours, removing the foil in the last 30 minutes to get a crispy crust.
6. Let rest for 15 minutes before slicing. When serving, drizzle pan juices on top.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 425, Carbs: 1 g, Fats: 30 g, Saturated Fats: 11 g, Chol: 115 mg, Sodium: 320 mg, Protein: 36 g, Fiber: 0 g, Sugar: 0.3 g, Potassium: 470 mg

MOROCCAN ROAST LAMB (MÉCHOUI)



For more tenderness, marinate overnight in the refrigerator. Use a meat thermometer to achieve the perfect degree of doneness: lamb is medium rare at 145°F (63°C) and well done at 160°F (71°C).

Substitute chili powder for paprika for a milder flavor.

Servings: 6

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 70 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (4.5 lb. / 2 kg) leg of lamb
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 Tbsp. ground cumin
- 1 Tbsp. coriander seeds, crushed
- ½ tsp. chili powder
- ¼ cup (3.5 Tbsp. / 100 ml) olive oil
- Juice of 1 lemon

HOW TO COOK:

1. Mix the minced garlic, cumin, chopped coriander, chili powder, olive oil, and salt (to taste) in a bowl.
2. Rub the leg of the lamb with the marinade. Cover with foil and leave at room temperature for 15 minutes.
3. For the grill: Light the coals until red in color. Place the lamb on a rack over the coals. Cook without the lid on for 30 minutes, turning occasionally. Cover with foil and cook for another 40 minutes over low heat.
4. For the oven: Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C). Place the lamb on a baking tray, cover it with foil, and bake for one hour and ten minutes, removing the foil in the last 20 minutes to form a golden crust.
5. Drizzle with fresh lemon juice before serving.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 460, Carbs: 2 g, Protein: 39 g, Fats: 33 g, Saturated Fats: 12 g, Cholesterol: 135 mg, Sodium: 160 mg, Fiber: 1 g, Sugars: 0 g, Potassium: 550 mg

BAKED KIBBEH



Golden baked kibbeh is a harmony of bulgur, savory ground lamb, sweet caramelized onions, and aromatic spices. Despite the humble ingredients, kibbeh is not simple at all. Try adding cinnamon or allspice to the meat.

Serve with tahina-lemon sauce or plain Greek yogurt on the side.

Servings: 6

Prep Time: 25 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 lb. (500 g) ground lamb/ beef/ turkey
- 2 medium yellow onions, finely chopped
- 50 g butter
- 1 cup (180 g) fine bulgur wheat
- ¾ cup (100 g) pine nuts
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil/ sunflower oil/ avocado oil
- 1 tsp. kibbeh spices/ ground cumin
- Salt and pepper

HOW TO COOK:

1. Rinse the bulgur under cold water, then soak it in warm water for 15 minutes. Drain thoroughly and wring out the excess water with a clean kitchen towel.
2. Heat the oil in a skillet. Fry the onions and pine nuts until the onions are soft and lightly golden, about 5-7 minutes. Add the cumin, salt, and pepper.
3. Combine the soaked bulgur, ground meat, and half of the fried onion mixture. Stir with your hands or a spoon until smooth.
4. Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Lightly oil a baking dish. Place half of the meat mixture on the bottom, spreading it evenly. Add the remaining onion mixture as a middle layer. Place the remaining meat mixture on top. Smooth the surface with a wet spoon.
5. Make diamond-shaped incisions with a knife, drizzle with oil, or sprinkle with small pieces of butter. Bake for 30 minutes or until golden brown. Let rest for 5 minutes before slicing.
6. Serve with a simple salad of cucumber, mint, lemon, and yogurt.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 320, Carbs: 18 g, Protein: 23 g, Fats: 18 g, Saturated Fats: 6 g, Cholesterol: 65 mg, Sodium: 210 mg, Fiber: 2 g, Sugars: 2 g, Potassium: 350 mg

BREADS, SIDES & SNACKS

HOMEMADE PITA BREAD



If all you have is a packet of yeast, some flour, and olive oil, you will know the joy of watching small circles of dough turn into soft pillows on a hot pan. If you add za'atar or nigella seeds to the dough, the pita takes on a Levantine flavor.

Use whole wheat flour for more fiber and a nuttier flavor.

Servings: 8 pitas

Prep Time: 10 minutes (plus 1 hour rise)

Cook Time: 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups (375 g) all-purpose flour
- 1 packet (2¼ tsp. / 7 g) instant yeast
- 1 cup (240 ml) warm water (about 105–110°F / 40–43°C)
- 1 tsp. sugar (optional, to activate yeast)
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tsp. salt

HOW TO COOK:

1. Mix the warm water and sugar in a bowl. Add the yeast and let it sit for 5-10 minutes until it becomes foamy.
2. Combine the flour, salt, yeast mixture, and olive oil. Stir until the dough forms.
3. Knead for 5-7 minutes until smooth. Cover and let rise in a warm place for 1 hour or until it has doubled in size.
4. Divide into 8 equal balls. Roll each into a circle 6-7 inches (15-18 cm) in diameter.
5. Cook on a heated cast-iron or non-stick skillet or griddle for 2 minutes on each side until golden. Make sure your skillet is very hot - the sudden heat creates steam, which turns the pita into a perfect pocket.
6. It can be baked in the oven at 475°F (245°C) for 3 to 5 minutes.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 165, Carbs: 30 g, Fats: 2.5 g, Saturated Fat: 0.3 g, Chol: 0 mg, Sodium: 200 mg, Protein: 4.5 g, Fiber: 1.2 g, Sugars: 0.4 g, Potassium: 60 mg

TURKISH GÖZLEME (SPINACH & FETA FLATBREAD)



You can use self-rising flour to make Turkish gözleme - some home cooks in Turkey do just that to make the dough fluffier and quicker. The rustic, chewy, traditional flavor is given by all-purpose flour. However, if you want a faster, softer version or have run out of patience (or yeast or baking powder), flour to raise the dough is a great solution.

Leftover greens or mashed potatoes in the fridge are also great for the filling.

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 20 minutes (plus 20 minutes resting)

Cook Time: 10-12 minutes

INGREDIENTS

For the Dough:

- 2 cups (250 g) all-purpose flour / plain flour
- ½ cup (120 ml) warm water
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- ½ tsp. salt

For the Filling:

- 1½ cups (90 g) fresh spinach, chopped
- ¾ cup (100 g) crumbled feta cheese/ ricotta/ halloumi
- Black pepper, to taste
- Olive oil, for cooking

HOW TO COOK:

1. Combine the flour and salt. Add warm water and olive oil. Knead for 8-10 minutes until smooth. Cover with a damp cloth and leave for 20-30 minutes.
2. Mix the chopped spinach with the crumbled feta. Season with black pepper. The spinach does not need to be pre-boiled - it will soften as the gözleme cooks.
3. Divide the dough into 4 balls. On a lightly floured surface, roll each into a thin circle (~10 inches / 25 cm). Place the filling on half of the dough, roll it up, and seal the edges.
4. Heat a large non-stick skillet or grill over medium-high heat. Brush with olive oil. Cook the gözleme for 2-3 minutes on each side or until golden brown and crispy.
5. Slice it into wedges and serve immediately - perfect on its own or with a slice of lemon.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 290, Carbs: 32 g, Fats: 14 g, Saturated Fat: 5 g, Chol: 18 mg, Sodium: 410 mg,
Protein: 9 g, Fiber: 2 g, Sugars: 1 g, Potassium: 185 mg

BRAISED CHICKPEAS WITH FETA & YOGURT



This dish epitomizes Mediterranean cuisine - it's simple and hearty. For a more traditional flavor, use dried chickpeas. Soak it overnight and cook it until tender. Instead of feta, you can add some salted capers. And for spice, add a pinch of smoked paprika, chili flakes, or harissa.

This dish is even better the next day. You can serve it as a separate dish with pita or rice, a fresh vegetable salad, or as a side dish to grilled chicken or kebabs.

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cans (15 oz. / 400 g each) chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 1 cup (240 ml) crushed tomatoes or tomato passata
- 1/2 cup (75 g) crumbled feta cheese/ goat cheese
- 1/2 cup (120 g) Greek yogurt
- 1/4 cup (15 g) chopped fresh parsley/ oregano / thyme.
- 2 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. In a large skillet or sauté pan, heat the olive oil over medium heat.
2. Add the canned chickpeas and stir to coat them with oil. Sauté for 2 to 3 minutes.
3. Add the crushed tomatoes to the chickpeas and bring to a boil. Season with salt and pepper.
4. Braise the chickpeas without a lid for about 15 minutes until the sauce thickens and does not stick to the chickpeas.
5. Spread into bowls. Serve each portion with a generous portion of Greek yogurt, crumbled feta, and fresh parsley.
6. Serve with a crust of bread or warm pita bread.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 305, Carbs: 28 g, Fats: 15 g, Saturated Fat: 5.5 g, Chol: 22 mg, Sodium: 570 mg, Protein: 13 g, Fiber: 8 g, Sugars: 6 g, Potassium: 580 mg

MUJADDARA (LENTILS & RICE WITH CARAMELIZED ONIONS)



To enhance the flavor, fry the rice in olive oil before adding the water. Use red lentils for a softer, creamier version (but note that they cook faster). Experiment with spices like cinnamon and coriander for more flavor.

To make the onions crispier, sprinkle them with a pinch of salt and a little flour before frying.

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 40 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup (200 g) brown or green lentils
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (140 g) long-grain rice (such as basmati)/ bulgur
- 2 large onions, thinly sliced
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt (or to taste)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. black pepper
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. ground cumin (optional, but recommended)

HOW TO COOK:

1. Rinse the lentils and place them in a saucepan with 4 cups (1 liter) of water.
2. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 15 minutes until slightly tender. Drain and set aside.
3. In the same pot, add the rice, 2 cups (500 ml) of fresh water, salt, and black pepper.
4. Add the partially cooked lentils to the pot. Bring to a boil and cover. Cook for 15 minutes over low heat until the rice is tender.
5. While the rice and lentils are simmering, heat the olive oil in a skillet.
6. Add onions and cook for 15 – 20 minutes, stirring occasionally, until golden brown. Remove from heat and set aside.
7. Mash the lentils and rice with a fork. For fluffier rice, let it rest for 5 minutes after cooking, and then fluff it up with a fork.
8. Top with caramelized onions and drizzle with oil from the pan.
9. Serve warm with yogurt, cucumber salad, or pita bread.

NUTRITIONAL FACTS/INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 350, Carbs: 55 g, Protein: 12 g, Fats: 10 g, Saturated Fats: 1.5 g, Cholesterol: 0 mg, Sodium: 300 mg, Fiber: 9 g, Sugars: 5 g, Potassium: 450 mg

PENNE ALL'ARRABBIATA WITH BURRATA



Sharp hearts need a soft landing. Contrast fiery and cool, bold and creamy. Let the burrata soften the heat. Whole wheat penne adds fiber and a nuttier flavor. With zucchini noodles or chickpea pasta, this recipe works great, too.

If Penne all'Arrabbiata is served with a fresh salad, sautéed greens, or roasted vegetables, you get a lovely, balanced Mediterranean dish.

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Cook Time: 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 12 oz. (340 g) penne / rigatoni
- 3 cups (700 ml) canned crushed tomatoes
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 4 garlic cloves, finely sliced
- 1½ tsp. red pepper flakes (adjust to taste)
- 2 fresh burrata balls (about 4 oz. / 115 g each)/ mozzarella
- Salt & freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- Fresh basil leaves for garnish (optional but lovely)

HOW TO COOK:

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook the pasta until tender, for about 9 to 11 minutes. Drain the water, reserving half a cup.
2. Meanwhile, heat the olive oil in a large skillet. Add garlic and chili flakes. Fry for 1 minute until fragrant but not browned.
3. Add the chopped tomatoes, a pinch of salt, and pepper. Stew for 10-12 minutes, stirring occasionally, until slightly thickened.
4. Add the drained pasta to the sauce. Mix well, adding the pasta water a little at a time to give the sauce the desired thickness.
5. Arrange the pasta on plates. Top each serving with half a burrata ball. Garnish with fresh basil if desired. Serve immediately - slice the burrata and let it melt into the sauce!

NUTRITIONAL FACTS/INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 460, Carbs: 52 g, Protein: 16 g, Fats: 20 g, Saturated Fats: 9 g, Cholesterol: 20 mg, Sodium: 280 mg, Fiber: 4 g, Sugars: 6 g, Potassium: 570 mg

SAUTÉED GREENS



There is something heartwarming about cooking greens. Don't overload the pan - cook in batches. Greens need room to dance and wilt. Add feta cheese, toasted pine nuts, or tahini for heartiness. And don't forget that leftovers from this dish are magical in an omelet or served warm on pita bread with some yogurt added.

Servings: 2

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Cook Time: 7 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 10 oz. (280 g) fresh spinach / chard/ beet greens/ mustard greens/ kale.
- 2 garlic cloves, finely sliced
- 1 Tbsp. lemon juice (about ½ lemon)/ balsamic vinegar
- 1 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes (optional, for warmth)
- 2 Tbsp. fresh parsley, chopped
- 2 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

HOW TO COOK:

1. Rinse the spinach or greens thoroughly and pat dry (no one wants soggy, salty greens!).
2. Heat the olive oil in a large skillet. Add garlic and fry for 30 seconds until fragrant - don't let them brown.
3. Add the greens a handful at a time. Stir until they are wilted. This will take about 4-6 minutes.
4. When the greens are quite soft and tender, add salt, pepper, lemon juice, and chili flakes (if using). Sprinkle with parsley and serve warm.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 130, Carbs: 5 g, Fats: 11 g, Saturated Fat: 1.5 g, Chol: 0 mg, Sodium: 160 mg, Protein: 3 g, Fiber: 2,5 g, Sugars: 1 g, Potassium: 600 mg

OLIVE TAPENADE



The word “tapenade” originates from the Provençal term for capers, a key ingredient in the dish. The ancient Greeks and Romans made similar olive-based spreads, laying the foundation for what eventually became tapenade.

Legend attributes the creation of the tapenade to the Greek goddess Aphrodite. According to this myth, the tapenade was invented by her lover, the god Dionysus, as a sign of respect for her. He combined the best olives, capers, and herbs to create a true Mediterranean dish.

Today, tapenade is served not only as a spread but also as a sauce for pasta or as a topping for vegetables.

Servings: 8 (1 cup)

Prep Time: 7 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup (135 g) Kalamata olives (green or black), pitted
- 3 garlic cloves
- 3 Tbsp. fresh parsley, chopped
- 2 Tbsp. capers
- 2 Tbsp. lemon juice
- salt and pepper, to taste
- rosemary, for garnish

HOW TO COOK:

1. Add all the ingredients to a blender except the olives. Blend until finely chopped.
2. Add olives to the blender and blend in short pulses.
3. Garnish with rosemary and serve with hummus, roasted bell peppers, or toasted bread.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 96, Carbs: 17.4 g, Fats: 2.1 g, Chol: 0 mg, Sodium: 888 mg, Protein: 4.5 g,
Fiber: 3.3 g, Sugars: 1.3 g

SWEET FINISHES & REFRESHING DRINKS

GREEK YOGURT & HONEY PARFAIT



Here's my ritual for making parfaits for your home kitchen. If there is no kiwi, use sliced bananas, peaches, or figs. Instead of granola, add crushed almonds or pistachios. A drop of orange blossom

water or a pinch of cinnamon will make it extra special. Mix yogurt with a spoonful of tahini for a slight nutty flavor.

This dish reminds you of sunny days and leisurely breakfasts. Let it be your gentle starter.

Servings: 2

Prep Time: 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup (240 g) Greek yogurt, plain/ full fat
- ½ cup (120 g) mixed fresh berries (strawberries, blackberries, raspberries, blueberries)
- ¼ cup (25 g) granola / rolled oats (unsweetened)
- 2 tsp. raw honey
- ½ small kiwi, peeled and diced
- Optional garnishes: mint leaves, a sprinkle of lemon zest

HOW TO COOK:

1. Place half of the Greek yogurt in each glass or jar.
2. Sprinkle a layer of granola or oatmeal over the yogurt.
3. Divide the berries and kiwi equally between the two servings.
4. Top each parfait with a teaspoon of honey.
5. Add a mint leaf or lemon zest if desired. Serve immediately.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 220, Fats: 7 g, Saturated Fats: 3 g, Chol: 5 mg, Sodium: 50 mg, Carbs: 26 g, Fiber: 3 g, Sugars: 15 g (natural), Potassium: 350 g

SICILIAN STRAWBERRY & CITRUS RICOTTA SALAD



Want something bright, fresh, and sweet? Try this simple fruit and citrus salad. I like to drizzle it with honey and sprinkle it with pine nuts. You can add orange zest or white balsamic vinegar for a brighter flavor. You can safely substitute ricotta for fresh goat cheese or labneh.

In the summer, replace citrus fruits with peaches or nectarines. In the fall, try figs or ripe pears.

Servings: 2

Prep Time: 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup (150 g) fresh strawberries, hulled and halved
- 1 large orange, peeled and sliced into segments
- ½ cup (125 g) fresh ricotta cheese
- 1 tsp. extra virgin olive oil
- A few fresh mint leaves/ basil, for garnish
- Pinch of sea salt (optional)
- Freshly ground black pepper (optional, for contrast)

HOW TO COOK:

1. Slice the strawberries and divide the orange into segments, removing any seeds and pips.
2. Arrange the fruit neatly on a serving dish. Place the fresh ricotta on top.
3. Sprinkle lightly with olive oil and a pinch of sea salt and pepper (if using), and garnish with torn mint leaves.
4. Serve immediately, preferably slightly chilled.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 180, Fats: 9 g, Saturated Fats: 4 g, Chol: 15 mg, Sodium: 90 mg, Carbs: 20 g, Fiber: 3 g, Sugars: 16 g, Protein: 6 g, Potassium: 400 mg

SIMPLE BAKLAVA



Craving something crunchy, melty, and sweet? This is honey baklava with a citrusy note and nutty filling! Experiment with nuts: soft almonds, comforting pecans, or tart hazelnuts? Sprinkle the nuts with orange zest before stacking them to add brightness.

Don't be afraid of phyllo! When working, cover it with a clean, damp kitchen towel and lightly oil it with a brush - don't drown it in oil.

Servings: 12

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 45 minutes

Cooling Time: 2 hours (for syrup to soak in)

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 package (16 oz. / 450 g) phyllo dough, thawed
- 2 cups (200 g) walnuts or pistachios, finely chopped
- 1 cup (225 g) unsalted butter, melted
- 1 cup (240 ml) water
- 1 cup (200 g) sugar/ honey
- 1 pinch of sea salt
- 1 tsp. lemon juice or zest (for a citrus balance)

HOW TO COOK:

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F / 175°C. Grease a 9x13-inch (23x33 cm) baking dish with melted butter.
2. Place one sheet of phyllo dough on a platter, brush with butter, and repeat with about half the sheets. Cover the unused dough with a damp towel to keep it from drying out.
3. Sprinkle evenly with chopped nuts and a pinch of sea salt, if desired.
4. Continue laying out the remaining dough and brushing it with butter.
5. With a sharp knife, cut out rhombuses or squares in the top layers.
6. Bake for 45 minutes until golden and crispy.
7. Meanwhile, combine the sugar, water, and lemon juice or zest in a saucepan. Boil for 10 minutes and cool.
8. Pour the syrup over the baked baklava immediately after removing it from the oven. Allow to soak for at least 2 hours before serving.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 310, Fats: 22 g, Saturated Fats: 9 g, Chol: 20 mg, Sodium: 65 mg, Carbs: 25 g, Fiber: 1.5 g, Sugars: 16 g, Protein: 3 g, Potassium: 90 mg

DATE & NUT ENERGY BALLS



These energy balls, made with dates and nuts, are simple, nutritious, and require no baking. These little energy bites became my favorite treat. If you don't have rolled oats, use shredded coconut or ground flaxseed. 1 tablespoon of honey or maple syrup will add sweetness. Nuts are greatly substituted with sunflower or pumpkin seeds.

Servings: 20

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 0 minutes (no bake!)

INGREDIENTS:

- 1½ cups (225 g) Medjool dates, pitted
- 1 cup (120 g) raw walnuts / almonds
- ¼ cup (20 g) rolled oats
- 2 Tbsp. (30 ml) olive oil or neutral oil
- ½ tsp. sea salt
- ¼ cup (30 g) sesame seeds, for rolling

HOW TO COOK:

1. If you have dry dates, soak them in warm water for 5 - 10 minutes, then drain.
2. Combine the dates, nuts, rolled oats, oil, and salt in a food processor. Whisk until the mixture is sticky and holds together.
3. Measure out a tablespoonful and roll into balls.
4. Dip each ball in the sesame seeds.
5. Chill in the refrigerator for 15-30 minutes to let them firm up or enjoy right away!

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 110, Fats: 7 g, Saturated Fats: 0.7 g, Chol: 0 mg, Sodium: 45 mg, Carbs: 10.9 g, Fiber: 2 g, Sugars: 8 g, Protein: 2 g, Potassium: 130 mg

SESAME HALVA BARS



Nutty. Velvety. Slightly sweet. An age-old treat that fits perfectly on modern menus. I recreated this recipe with a few adjustments - using almond flour for added firmness and sunflower seeds for extra crunch. I suggest adding chopped toasted pistachios or walnuts for a variety of flavors and textures.

Add cinnamon or cardamom for a spicy delight!

Servings: 10 bars

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 5 minutes

Chill Time: 1 hour (optional, for firmness)

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup (240 g) tahini (pure sesame paste)
- ½ cup (120 ml) honey / maple syrup
- ½ cup (60 g) almond flour
- 2 Tbsp. (20 g) sunflower seeds (plus more for topping)
- ⅛ tsp. sea salt
- A drizzle of olive oil to smooth the texture

HOW TO COOK:

1. In a saucepan over low heat, combine the tahini, honey (or maple syrup), and sea salt. Stirring constantly, cook for 3-5 minutes until the mixture thickens slightly. Do not boil.
2. Remove from heat. Pour in the almond flour and sunflower seeds until blended.
3. Press the warm mixture into a small parchment-lined loaf mold (8x4 inches / 20x10 cm) or shallow dish.
4. Sprinkle the sunflower seeds on top and press them in lightly.
5. Refrigerate the halva for 1 hour and then slice into loaves.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 230, Fats: 18 g, Saturated Fats: 2 g, Chol: 0 mg, Sodium: 60 mg, Carbs: 12 g, Fiber: 2 g, Sugars: 9 g, Protein: 5 g, Potassium: 130 mg

ALMENDRADOS



This is a traditional Spanish cookie with a touch of Arabic cuisine that introduced almonds and gourmet sweets to the Iberian Peninsula.

Almendrados are served with aromatic coffee or a sweet wine such as Pedro Ximénez or Moscatel sherry, which enhances their delicate almond flavor.

Servings: 20 – 24 cookies

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1½ cups (170 g) almond flour
- ½ cup (100 g) sugar
- 24 almonds (25 g)
- 1 whole egg, beaten
- 1 tsp. lemon extract
- 1 Tbsp. lemon zest

HOW TO COOK:

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Combine the beaten eggs, zest, flour, lemon extract, and sugar. Knead the dough until smooth.
3. Measure the dough with a tablespoon, shape each cookie into an oval, and place them on a baking sheet. You should end up with 24 cookies.
4. Press almonds onto the top of each cookie.
5. Bake for 20 minutes and let it cool before serving.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 38, Fats: 292 g, Cholesterol: 7 mg, Sodium: 4 mg, Carbs: 5.4 g, Fiber: 0.7 g, Sugars: 4.3 g, Protein: 1.6 g

MINT & LEMON TEA



This tea calms the heart and cools the body. When I moved from a noisy city apartment to a house with enough space for pots of herbs, the first plant I bought was mint. By mid-summer, I was adding mint to everything, including tea.

If you don't like honey, add a slice of apple or a few stevia leaves while brewing. Instead of lemon, you can brew orange slices and add a drop of fresh lime juice. Prepare Moroccan style by adding green tea leaves before brewing.

Servings: 2

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Cook Time: 5 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups / 480 ml filtered water
- 1 small organic lemon, sliced (with peel)
- ¼ cup fresh mint leaves, lightly crushed
- 1–2 tsp. honey (optional, to taste)
- Ice cubes or crushed ice (optional, for serving)
- pinch of salt (enhances flavor subtly)

HOW TO COOK:

1. Bring water to a boil in a small saucepan.
2. Add lemon slices and mint leaves. Reduce the heat and cook for 3–5 minutes to allow the flavors to develop.
3. Remove from heat and let steep for another 2 minutes.
4. Strain into cups. Sweeten with honey, if desired.
5. Serve hot, or add ice for a refreshing cold drink.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 17.7, Fats: 0.1 g, Saturated Fat: 0 g, Sodium: 28 mg, Carbs: 5.1 g, Cholesterol: 0 mg, Fiber: 0.9 g, Sugars: 4.3 g, Protein: 0.3 g, Potassium: 83 mg

HERBAL INFUSION



This tea is for clarity of mind and peace of heart. I imagine a stone cottage and a teapot with a handful of herbs wrapped in a linen napkin. In our noisy modern lives, this infusion brings silence and slows things down.

Instead of sage, use rosemary or lemon balm. Orange peel is just as fragrant as lemon peel. To support immunity or simply for spice, add a thin slice of fresh ginger or cloves.

Servings: 2

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Cook Time: 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups | 480 ml filtered water
- 1 tsp. dried sage leaves / 3 fresh leaves
- 1 tsp. dried thyme / 2 fresh sprigs
- 1 strip lemon peel (no pith)
- 1 tsp. honey / date syrup (optional)
- sea salt (optional)

HOW TO COOK:

1. Bring the water to a gentle boil in a small saucepan.
2. Turn off the heat, and add sage, thyme, and lemon zest.
3. Cover and let steep for 8–10 minutes.
4. Strain into mugs. Add honey or date syrup if using.
5. Drink slowly, preferably in a quiet place.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 14.9, Fats: 0 g, Saturated Fat: 0 g, Sodium: 9.9 mg, Cholesterol: 0 mg, Carbs: 3.9 g, Fiber: 0.5 g, Sugars: 3 g, Protein: 0 g, Potassium: 25 mg

TURKISH COFFEE



Turkish coffee is deep and rich with a light foam. It has come to us from distant centuries. The coffee is ground very finely, like powdered sugar. Add a pinch of cinnamon or cardamom. The cozy, spicy aroma goes well with Turkish delights.

Sugar level: Sade (unsweetened), Az şekerli (slightly sweet, ~½ tsp), Orta (medium, ~1 tsp), Şekerli (sweet, ~2 tsp).

Servings: 1 cup (2.5 oz | 75 ml)

Prep Time: 2 minutes

Cook Time: 5 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 heaping tsp. finely ground Turkish coffee (~6 g)
- 2.5 oz (75 ml) cold filtered water
- 1 tsp. sugar (optional, adjust to taste)
- Pinch of ground cardamom (optional, traditional in some regions)
- Pinch of sea salt (optional, deepens bitterness for contrast)

HOW TO COOK:

1. In a Turkish coffee pot (cezve), mix cold water, coffee, and sugar (to taste). Stir well until everything is dissolved.
2. Place over low heat. Do not stir. Allow the coffee to heat slowly until foam appears on the surface.
3. Before the coffee boils, remove the pot from the heat. Skim off the foam with a spoon and pour it into a cup.
4. Return the coffee pot to the heat and allow the foam to rise again. Carefully pour the remaining coffee into the cup.
5. Allow the coffee to steep for 30 seconds before drinking. Do not stir the coffee after serving.

NUTRITIONAL INFO (PER SERVING):

Calories: 5.1, Fats: 0 g, Saturated Fat: 0 g, Sodium: 4.9 mg, Carbs: 1 g, Cholesterol: 0 mg, Fiber: 0 g, Sugars: 0 g, Protein: 0.2 g, Potassium: 60 mg

28-DAY MEAL PLAN

WEEK 1

Menu for the first week for health-conscious foodies — people who love to cook and are interested in healthy living, the Mediterranean diet, and new flavors.

MONDAY

Breakfast: [Greek Yogurt with Honey and Walnuts](#)

Lunch: [Chickpea & Tomato Stew](#) + [Mujaddara](#) + Cucumber slices

Dinner: [Harissa Spiced Chicken](#) + [Grilled Zucchini Salad](#) + [Pita Bread](#)

TUESDAY

Breakfast: [Scrambled Eggs with Feta & Olives](#) + [slice of pita](#)

Lunch: [Stuffed Bell Peppers with Rice](#) + [Labneh with Olive Oil & Herbs](#)

Dinner: [Grilled Mackerel with Tomatoes](#) + [Sautéed Greens](#) + [Mujaddara](#)

WEDNESDAY

Breakfast: [Greek Semolina Porridge \(Halvâ Me Simigdâli\)](#) + Fresh Orange Slices

Lunch: [Red Lentil Soup \(Mercimek Çorbası\)](#) + [Za'atar Manaqish](#) + [Greek Village Salad \(Horiatiki\)](#)

Dinner: [Moroccan Style Kefta](#) + [Bulgur Pilaf](#) + [Roasted Peppers](#)

THURSDAY

Breakfast: [Date & Almond Energy Bites](#) + [Mint Tea](#) + Apple Slices

Lunch: [Eggplant Rolls with Walnuts & Garlic](#) + [Simple Fattoush](#) + Yogurt Dip

Dinner: [Lemon & Garlic Fish](#) + [Braised Chickpeas with Feta & Yogurt](#) + [Sautéed Greens](#)

FRIDAY

Breakfast: [Shakshuka](#) + [Pita Bread](#)

Lunch: [Greek Lemon Chicken Soup \(Avgolemono\)](#) + [Beetroot Orange Salad](#)

Dinner: [Roasted Lamb Shoulder](#) + [Zucchini Fritters with Yogurt Dip](#) + [Mujaddara](#)

SATURDAY

Breakfast: [Labneh with Olive Oil & Herbs](#) + [Turkish Gözleme](#) + Sliced Tomatoes

Lunch: [Grilled Octopus with Vegetables](#) + [Bulgur Pilaf](#) + [Greek Village Salad \(Horiatiki\)](#)

Dinner: [Moroccan Roast Lamb \(Méchoui\)](#) + [Stuffed Grape Leaves](#) + [Sautéed Greens](#)

SUNDAY

Breakfast: [Greek Yogurt & Honey Parfait](#) + [Date & Nut Energy Balls](#)

Lunch: [Baked Cod with Golden Breadcrumbs Crust](#) + [Grilled Zucchini Salad](#) + [Mujaddara](#)

Dinner: [Baked Kibbeh](#) + [Roasted Cauliflower with Tahini Sauce](#) + [Tabbouleh](#)

Snacks & Extras:

[Olive Tapenade](#) (with pita)

[Simple Baklava](#) or [Sesame Halva Bars](#) (small servings)

[Herbal Infusion](#) or [Mint & Lemon Tea](#) (daily drink option)

GROCERY LIST – WEEK 1 (FOR 4 PEOPLE)

DAIRY & REFRIGERATED:

- Greek Yogurt – 4 (32 oz. / 907 g) containers
- Feta Cheese – 1 (8 oz. / 227 g) block
- Eggs – 2 dozen
- Unsalted Butter – 1 stick (4 oz. / 113 g)
- Milk – 4 cups (1 L)

PRODUCE:

- Yellow Onions – 6 (approx. 900 g)
- Garlic Heads – 3
- Cucumbers – 3 large
- Zucchini – 6 medium
- Bell Peppers – 6 medium
- Fresh Oranges – 6
- Lemons – 6
- Apples – 4 medium
- Eggplant – 2 medium
- Tomatoes – 2 lb. (approx. 900 g) Roma or vine-ripened
- Fresh Mint – 1 bunch
- Fresh Parsley – 1 bunch
- Fresh Cilantro – 1 bunch
- Fresh Dill – 1 bunch
- Fresh Oregano – 1 bunch
- Red Onion – 1 large

- Beets – 2 medium
- Cauliflower – 1 head
- Greens (e.g., Spinach, Swiss Chard, Kale) – 2 large bunches

PANTRY:

- Olive Oil – 1 large bottle (33.8 fl oz. / 1 L)
- Salt – 1 container (Kosher or Sea Salt)
- Black Peppercorns – 1 container
- Honey – 1 jar (12 oz. / 340 g)
- Walnuts – 1 (16 oz / 454 g) bag
- Dried Chickpeas – 1 (1 lb. / 454 g) bag or Canned Chickpeas – 4 (15 oz. / 425 g) cans
- Basmati Rice – 1 (2 lb. / 907 g) bag
- Pita Bread – 2 (6-count) packages
- Harissa Paste – 1 jar (6 oz. / 170 g)
- Red Lentils – 1 (1 lb. / 454 g) bag
- Semolina – 1 (1 lb. / 454 g) bag (for porridge)
- Za'atar Spice Blend – 1 container (4 oz. / 113 g)
- Bulgur Wheat (Fine or Medium) – 1 (1 lb. / 454 g) bag
- Almonds – 1 (8 oz. / 227 g) bag
- Dates (pitted) – 1 (8 oz. / 227 g) package
- Tahini – 1 jar (16 oz. / 454 g)
- Breadcrumbs – 1 (15 oz. / 425 g) container
- Canned Diced Tomatoes – 2 (14.5 oz. / 411 g) cans
- Grape Leaves (jarred) – 1 jar (16 oz. / 454 g)
- Dried Mint – 1 container (1 oz. / 28 g)

- Vegetable Broth or Chicken Broth – 2 (32 fl oz. / 946 ml) containers
- Black Olives (Kalamata or similar) – 1 jar (8 oz. / 227 g)

MEAT & SEAFOOD:

- Boneless, Skinless Chicken Thighs or Breasts – 2 lb. (approx. 900 g)
- Whole Mackerel – 2-3 fish, depending on size (1.5 lb. / 700 g total)
- Ground Beef or Lamb – 1.5 lb. (700 g)
- Lamb Shoulder Roast – 1 (3 lb. / 1.3 kg)
- Cod Fillets – 1.5 lb. (700 g)
- Octopus – 1 lb. (450 g) (fresh or frozen)

TIPS FOR SHOPPING SMART

- Buy bulk where it makes sense: grains, legumes, olive oil, eggs.
- Fresh herbs can be used across dishes — parsley and mint appear often.
- Greek yogurt can be split across breakfast, dips, and sauces.
- Use leftover cooked rice or lentils creatively: in bowls, fritters, or salads.
- Citrus fruits, such as lemons and oranges, are used in both savory dishes and desserts.
- For kids: make extra yogurt parfaits, pita wraps, and veggie fritters — easy to reheat and lunchbox-friendly.

WEEK 2

Menu for busy families who want health and flavor, without spending all day in the kitchen.

MONDAY

Breakfast: [Greek Yogurt with Honey and Walnuts](#) + Apple slices

Lunch: [Mujaddara \(Lentils & Rice with Caramelized Onions\)](#) + Cucumber slices

Dinner: [Lemon & Garlic Fish](#) + [Sautéed Greens](#) + [Bulgur Pilaf](#)

TUESDAY

Breakfast: [Scrambled Eggs with Feta & Olives](#) + toast

Lunch: [Chickpea & Tomato Stew](#) + pita bread

Dinner: [Moroccan Style Kefta](#) + [Grilled Zucchini Salad](#)

WEDNESDAY

Breakfast: [Greek Semolina Porridge \(Halvâ Me Simigdâli\)](#) + dates

Lunch: [Red Lentil Soup \(Mercimek Çorbası\)](#) + [Turkish Gözleme](#)

Dinner: [Baked Cod with Golden Breadcrumbs Crust](#) + [Roasted Peppers](#)

THURSDAY

Breakfast: [Manaqish Za'atar](#) + Greek Tea

Lunch: [Stuffed Bell Peppers with Rice](#) + tomato & parsley salad

Dinner: [Greek Lemon Chicken Skewers](#) + grilled vegetables

FRIDAY

Breakfast: [Labneh with Olive Oil & Herbs](#) + cherry tomatoes + flatbread

Lunch: [Beetroot Orange Salad](#) + [Braised Chickpeas with Yogurt](#)

Dinner: [White Fish Stew](#) + rustic bread

SATURDAY (FAMILY TREAT DAY)

Breakfast: [Mediterranean-Inspired Buddha Bowl](#) (with egg, avocado, hummus)

Lunch: [Shrimp Stew](#) + rice + lemon wedges

Dinner: [Roasted Lamb Shoulder](#) + [Greek Village Salad](#) + pita

LAZY SUNDAY

Breakfast: [Shakshuka](#) + crusty bread

Lunch: [Greek Spanakopita](#) + simple tomato cucumber salad

Dinner: [Baked Cod with Golden Breadcrumbs](#) + Rice + Steamed Green Beans

GROCERY LIST – WEEK 2 (FOR 4 PEOPLE)

FRESH PRODUCE

- Zucchini – 4 medium (800 g)
- Bell peppers (mixed colors) – 4 (600 g)
- Tomatoes – 6 medium (800 g)
- Cucumbers – 2 (500 g)
- Carrot 1 (100 g)
- Yellow onions – 6 (900 g)
- Green beans – 1 lb. (450 g)
- Beets – 2 medium (400 g)
- Oranges – 2 medium (300 g)
- Avocados – 2 (300 g)
- Baby spinach or chard – 1 (300 g)
- Fresh parsley – 1 bunch (30 g)
- Fresh mint – 1 bunch (30 g)
- Fresh dill – 1 bunch (30 g)

PANTRY STAPLES & DRY GOODS

- Dry chickpeas or canned – 2 cans (2 × 300 g) or 1 cup dry (200 g)
- Brown or green lentils – 1½ cups dry (300 g)
- Red lentils – 1 cup dry (200 g)
- White rice – 3 cups dry (500 g)
- Bulgur – 1 cup (250 g)
- Semolina – 1 cup (200 g)

- Breadcrumbs – 1½ cups (150 g)
- Za'atar – 2 Tbsp. (20 g)
- Pita bread – 6 rounds

DAIRY

- Feta cheese – 11 oz. (300 g)
- Burrata or fresh cheese (optional) – 8 oz. (225 g)
- Butter – 4 Tbsp. (60 g)

PROTEIN & SEAFOOD

- White fish fillets (cod or similar) – 2 lb. (900 g)
- Shrimp (peeled) – 1 lb. (500 g)
- Ground beef or lamb – 1 lb. (500 g)
- Chicken breast or thigh – 1 lb. (500 g)
- Lamb shoulder (bone-in or boneless) – 3 lb. (1.5 kg)
- Eggs – 10

NUTS, SEEDS & SNACKS

- Walnuts – 1 cup chopped (100 g)

BAKERY & BREADS

- Phyllo dough (for spanakopita) – 1 pack (250 g)
- Crusty bread – 1 (200 g)

CONDIMENTS & MISCELLANEOUS

- Kalamata or green olives – 10 (150 g)

- Yogurt dip (plain or herbed) – 1–2 cups (250–500 g)

WEEK 3

Mediterranean Meal Plan for Week 3, with an emphasis on filling lunches and dinners with protein, minimal new ingredients, and family-friendly convenience. Repeat meals are used wisely to make shopping and cooking easier without sacrificing variety.

MONDAY

Breakfast: [Scrambled Eggs with Feta & Olives](#) + Whole Grain Bread

Lunch: [Lemon & Garlic Fish](#) + [Bulgur Pilaf](#) + Cucumber slices

Dinner: [Harissa Spiced Chicken](#) + Roasted Carrots + Pita Bread+ [Greek Yogurt & Honey Parfait](#)

TUESDAY

Breakfast: [Greek Yogurt with Honey and Walnuts](#)

Lunch: [Chickpea & Tomato Stew](#) + [Date & Nut Energy Balls](#)

Dinner: [Grilled Baby Squid with Lemon & Thyme](#) + Roasted Potatoes

WEDNESDAY

Breakfast: [Halvå Me Simigdáli \(Greek Semolina Porridge\)](#)

Lunch: [Mujaddara \(Lentils & Rice with Caramelized Onions\)](#) + Yogurt + [Sesame Halva Bars](#)

Dinner: [Moroccan Style Kefta](#) + [Grilled Zucchini Salad](#)

THURSDAY

Breakfast: [Labneh with Olive Oil & Herbs](#) + Pita + [Sicilian Strawberry & Citrus Ricotta Salad](#)

Lunch: [Shrimp Stew](#) + Simple Arugula Salad

Dinner: [Baked Kibbeh](#) + [Greek Village Salad](#)

FRIDAY

Breakfast: [Manaqish Za'atar](#) + Cherry Tomatoes

Lunch: [White Fish Stew](#) + Rustic Bread + [Almendrados \(Almond Cookies\)](#)

Dinner: [Sautéed Liver with Onions and Herbs](#) + [Steamed Greens](#) + Couscous

SATURDAY (FAMILY TREAT DAY)

Breakfast: [Mediterranean-Inspired Buddha Bowl](#) + [Simple Baklava](#)

Lunch: [Grilled Octopus with Vegetables](#) + Boiled Rice

Dinner: [Roasted Lamb Shoulder](#) + Greek Lemon Potatoes + [Grilled Zucchini](#)

LAZY SUNDAY

Breakfast: [Date & Almond Energy Bites](#) + Fresh Orange Slices

Lunch: [Stuffed Sardines](#) + [Beetroot Orange Salad](#) + [Mint & Lemon Tea](#) + [Sesame Halva Bars](#)

Dinner: [Moroccan Roast Lamb \(Méchoui\)](#) + Couscous + [Sautéed Greens](#)

GROCERY LIST – WEEK 3 (FOR 4 PEOPLE)

DAIRY & EGGS

- Greek yogurt – 6 cups (1.4 L)
- Feta cheese – 10 oz (280 g)
- Ricotta cheese – 1 cup (250 g)
- Eggs – 8 large

MEATS, POULTRY, SEAFOOD

- White fish fillets – 2 lb. (900 g)
- Chicken thighs or breasts – 1½ lb. (700 g)
- Shrimp – 1½ lb. (680 g)
- Baby squid – 1½ lb. (680 g)
- Octopus – 2 lb. (900 g)
- Lamb shoulder – 2½ lb. (1.1 kg)
- Ground lamb or beef – 1½ lb. (680 g)
- Liver (chicken or lamb) – 1 lb. (450 g)
- Sardines (whole, cleaned) – 1 lb. (450 g)

GRAINS & BREAD

- Whole grain bread – 1 loaf (about 450 g)
- Pita bread – 6 pieces
- Rustic bread – 1 small loaf
- Flatbread (for manaqish) – 4 rounds
- Bulgur – 2 cups (320 g)

- Couscous – 2 cups (300 g)
- Rice (long grain or basmati) – 2 cups (360 g)
- Semolina – ½ cup (80 g)

CANNED & JARRED GOODS

- Canned tomatoes – 3 cans (14 oz. / 400 g each)
- Olives (kalamata or mixed) – 1 cup (150 g)
- Za'atar spice blend – 3 Tbsp. (25 g)
- Harissa paste – 3 Tbsp. (45 g)
- Sesame seeds – ½ cup (70 g)
- Almond flour – 1 cup (100 g)
- Honey – ¾ cup (250 g)
- Olive oil – approx. 1½ cups (360 ml)
- Salt & black pepper – to taste

PRODUCE

- Yellow onions – 6 (900 g)
- Garlic cloves – 6 (30 g)
- Carrots – 4 medium (400 g)
- Potatoes – 6 large (1.2 kg)
- Zucchini – 4 medium (600 g)
- Cucumber – 2 medium (500 g)
- Cherry tomatoes – 1 cup (150 g)
- Tomatoes – 4 medium (500 g)
- Beets (cooked or raw) – 2 medium (400 g)

- Oranges – 4 large (800 g)
- Lemons – 6 (700 g)
- Fresh mint – 1 bunch (30 g)
- Fresh parsley – 1 bunch (30 g)
- Arugula – 4 cups (120 g)
- Mixed vegetables (for octopus, Buddha bowl) – ~2 lb. (900 g)
- Fresh strawberries – 1 cup (150 g)

NUTS & DRIED FRUIT

- Walnuts – $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (90 g)
- Almonds (whole, raw) – 1 cup (130 g)
- Dates (Medjool or regular) – $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups (300 g)

BAKED GOODS & SWEETS

- Phyllo dough – 8 sheets (250 g)
- Sugar – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (100 g)

WEEK 4

MONDAY

Breakfast: [Greek Yogurt with Honey and Walnuts](#)

Lunch: [Chickpea & Tomato Stew](#) served with [Mujaddara](#) and Cucumber slices.

Dinner: [Harissa Spiced Chicken](#) with [Grilled Zucchini Salad](#) and a side of [Homemade Pita Bread](#).

TUESDAY

Breakfast: [Scrambled Eggs with Feta & Olives](#) accompanied by a slice of Pita Bread.

Lunch: [Stuffed Bell Peppers with Rice](#) and [Labneh with Olive Oil & Herbs](#).

Dinner: [Grilled Mackerel with Tomatoes](#) served with [Sautéed Greens](#) and a portion of [Mujaddara](#).

WEDNESDAY

Breakfast: [Greek Semolina Porridge \(Halvā Me Simigdāli\)](#) with Fresh Orange Slices.

Lunch: [Red Lentil Soup \(Mercimek Çorbası\)](#) with [Za'atar Manaqish](#) and a [Greek Village Salad \(Horiatiki\)](#).

Dinner: [Moroccan-style Kefta](#) with [Bulgur Pilaf](#) and [Roasted Peppers](#).

THURSDAY

Breakfast: [Date & Almond Energy Bites](#) with [Mint & Lemon Tea](#) and Apple Slices.

Lunch: [Eggplant Rolls with Walnuts & Garlic](#) with a [Simple Fattoush](#) and a Yogurt Dip.

Dinner: [Lemon & Garlic Fish](#) (such as cod or halibut) served with [Braised Chickpeas with Feta & Yogurt](#) and [Sautéed Greens](#).

FRIDAY

Breakfast: [Shakshuka](#) served with Pita Bread.

Lunch: [Greek Lemon Chicken Soup \(Avgolemono\)](#) with a [Beetroot Orange Salad](#).

Dinner: [Roasted Lamb Shoulder](#) with [Zucchini Fritters](#) with Yogurt Dip and [Mujaddara](#).
[Sesame Halva Bars](#) (small servings)

SATURDAY

Breakfast: [Labneh with Olive Oil & Herbs](#) served with [Turkish Gözleme](#) and Sliced Tomatoes.

Lunch: [Greek Chicken Pita](#) (served with [Tabbouleh](#) on the side). [Herbal Infusion](#).

Dinner: [Moroccan Roast Lamb \(Méchoui\)](#) with [Stuffed Grape Leaves \(Dolma\)](#) and Sautéed Greens.

SUNDAY

Breakfast: [Greek Yogurt & Honey Parfait](#) with [Date & Nut Energy Balls](#).

Lunch: [Baked Cod with Golden Breadcrumb Crust](#) with [Grilled Zucchini Salad](#) and [Mujaddara](#).

Dinner: [Baked Kibbeh](#) with [Roasted Cauliflower with Tahini Sauce](#) and [Baba Ghanoush](#).
[Sicilian Strawberry & Citrus Ricotta Salad](#)

GROCERY LIST – WEEK 4 (FOR 4 PEOPLE)

DAIRY & REFRIGERATED:

- Greek Yogurt – 4 (32 oz / 900 g) containers
- Feta Cheese – 1 (8 oz. / 227 g) block
- Eggs – 24 (2 dozen)
- Ricotta Cheese – 1 (15 oz. / 425 g) container
- Milk – 1 quart (946 ml)

PRODUCE:

- Yellow Onions – 6 large (2 lb. / 900 g)
- Garlic – 3 heads (6 oz / 170 g)
- Cucumbers – 4 large
- Zucchini – 6 medium (2.5 lb. / 1.1 kg)
- Bell Peppers – 6 medium (2.5 lb. / 1.1 kg), mixed colors
- Fresh Oranges – 6 medium
- Lemons – 6 medium
- Apples – 4 medium
- Eggplant – 3 medium
- Tomatoes – 3 lb. (1.3 kg) Roma or vine-ripened
- Fresh Mint – 2 bunches
- Fresh Parsley – 2 large bunches
- Fresh Cilantro – 1 bunch
- Fresh Dill – 1 bunch
- Red Onion – 2 medium

- Beets – 2 medium
- Cauliflower – 1 large head (3 lb. / 1.36 kg)
- Greens (e.g., Spinach, Swiss Chard, Kale) – 2 large bags or bunches
- Strawberries – 1 lb. (450 g)

PANTRY:

- Honey – 1 small jar (8 oz. / 225 g)
- Walnuts – 1 (16 oz. / 450 g) bag
- Dried Chickpeas – 1 lb. (450 g) bag
- Basmati Rice – 2 lb. (900 g) bag
- All-Purpose Flour – 1 (1 lb. / 450 g) bag
- Harissa Paste – 1 jar (6 oz. / 170 g)
- Red Lentils – 1 lb. (450 g) bag
- Semolina – 1 lb. (450 g) bag
- Za'atar Spice Blend – 1 container (4 oz. / 113 g)
- Bulgur Wheat (Fine or Medium) – 1 lb. (450 g) bag
- Almonds – 1 (8 oz. / 230 g) bag
- Dates (pitted) – 1 (8 oz. / 230 g) package
- Tahini – 1 jar (16 oz. / 450 g)
- Breadcrumbs – 1 (15 oz. / 425 g) container
- Canned Diced Tomatoes – 2 (14.5 oz. / 411 g) cans
- Grape Leaves (jarred) – 1 jar (16 oz. / 454 g)
- Black Olives (Kalamata or similar) – 1 jar (8 oz. / 230 g)
- Chicken Broth – 1 (32 fl oz. / 946 ml) carton
- Pita Bread (Store-bought) – 2 (6-count) packages (if not making homemade)

MEAT & SEAFOOD:

- Boneless, Skinless Chicken Thighs or Breasts – 3 lb. (1.3 kg)
- Whole Mackerel – 2-3 fish (1.5 lb. / 700 g total)
- Ground Meat (Beef or Lamb) – 2.5 lb. (1.1 kg)
- Lamb Shoulder Roast – 1 (4 lb. / 1.8 kg)
- Cod Fillets – 2 lb. (900 g)

About Me



My name is [Linda Gilmore](#). I am a food journalist and a cookbook author. I am highly recognized for making culinary magic in my home kitchen. I am also a busy mom of two. This means I am always on the run and looking for any chance to save time and money. I am a foodie through and through at my core, and I have grown into an **advocate for the Mediterranean lifestyle**. With a passion for healthy living and first-hand knowledge of what it takes to stick to a successful lifestyle plan, I will guide you throughout this journey.

The Internet is full of all the information a person might need, but surfing for the right pieces takes a lot of time and effort. Seeking answers to my amateurish questions led me to read numerous complex professional texts.

How much I wish I had a book with simple, step-by-step explanations? Perhaps that is the main reason I've written this one.

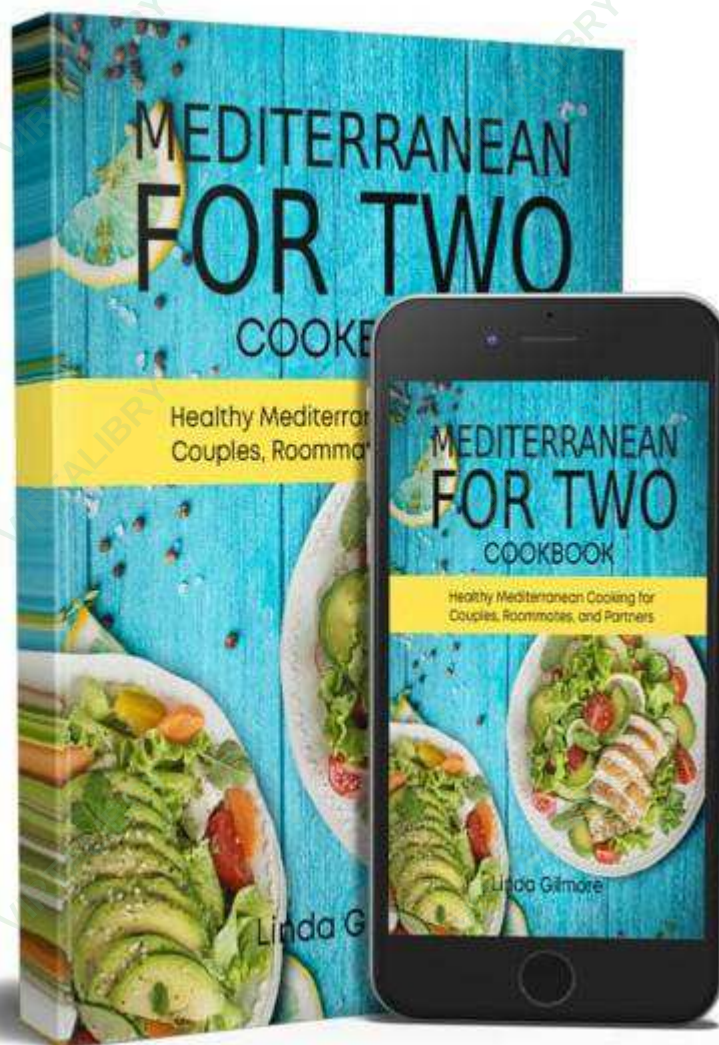
I hope this book will allow you to enjoy the Mediterranean lifestyle with someone special.

WHAT TO READ NEXT?

[Mediterranean Air Fryer Cookbook: Heart-Healthy Mediterranean Recipes for Cooking with Your Air Fryer. 7-Day Meal Plan](#)



[Mediterranean Cookbook for Two: Healthy Mediterranean Cooking for Couples, Roommates, and Partners](#)



Copyright

ALL ©COPYRIGHTS RESERVED 2025 by Linda Gilmore

All Rights Reserved. No part of this publication or the information in it may be quoted from or reproduced in any form by means such as printing, scanning, photocopying, or otherwise without prior written permission of the copyright holder.

Disclaimer and Terms of Use: Efforts have been made to ensure that the information in this book is accurate and complete; however, the author and the publisher do not warrant the accuracy of the information, text, or graphics contained within the book due to the rapidly changing nature of science, research, known and unknown facts, and the Internet. The author and the publisher are not responsible for errors, omissions, or contrary interpretations of the subject matter. This book is presented solely for motivational and informational purposes only.