



The Best of
 closetcooking
2024

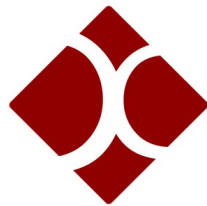


Kevin Lynch

The Best of Closet Cooking 2024

By: Kevin Lynch

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Introduction

Hi! I am Kevin Lynch and I am the author of ClosetCooking.com, a food and recipe website, where I share my favourite recipes that I cook in my closet sized kitchen. For most of my life I did not really cook much of anything but all that changed a few years ago when I found my love of cooking and things kind of snow balled from there! These days cooking is my passion and I spend most of my free time in the kitchen whipping up tasty dishes that I photograph and share on ClosetCooking.com.

It has become a tradition for me to assemble the most popular recipes on ClosetCooking.com every year and place them in a cookbook. This is the 2024 edition of The Best of Closet Cooking series with all of the tastiest recipes published on ClosetCooking.com in 2023. The year 2023 was filled with plenty of tasty recipes and this collection of them is an amazing one filled with a lot of quick and easy meals, sides, soups and appetizers that that are on the healthier side along with some decadent recipes for tailgating or special occasions! For your gastronomic pleasure I give you the 25 tastiest and most popular recipes from ClosetCooking.com in 2023 in order of popularity!

Enjoy!

Kevin Lynch



Cajun White Chicken Chili

Prep Time: 15 minutes **Cook Time:** 45 minutes
Total Time: 1 hour **Servings:** 6

A creamy white chicken chili with a cajun flavour theme!

ingredients

1 tablespoon oil
1 pound andouille sausage, sliced or diced
1 pound boneless and skinless chicken breasts or thighs
1 teaspoon [cajun seasoning](#)
1 tablespoon butter
1 cup onion, diced
1 cup celery, diced
1 cup bell pepper, diced
1 jalapeno pepper, finely diced
4 cloves garlic, chopped
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 tablespoon [cajun seasoning](#)
4 cups [chicken broth](#)
2 (14.5 ounce) cans white beans, rinsed and drained
1/2 cup [salsa verde](#)
1/2 cup sour cream (or crema or heavy cream or 4 ounces cream cheese)
1/4 cup parmigiano reggiano (parmesan cheese) (or cotija), grated
1 tablespoon lime juice (optional)
2 tablespoons cilantro (or parsley), chopped (optional)
2 green onions, thinly sliced (optional)
salt and pepper to taste



directions

1. Heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium heat, add the sausage and cook, about 5-7 minutes, before setting aside.
2. Add the chicken, seasoned with cajun seasoning, and cook until lightly golden brown, about 5-7 minutes, before setting aside.
3. Add the butter, let it melt, add the onion, celery, bell pepper and jalapeno, and cook until tender, about 7-10 minutes.
4. Add the garlic, cumin, and cajun seasoning, and cook until fragrant, about a minute.
5. Add the broth, beans, salsa verde, sausage, and chicken, bring to a boil, reduce the heat and simmer for 15 minutes.
6. Turn off the heat, remove the chicken and shred or slice it before returning it to the pot.
7. Add the sour cream and parmesan and let it melt.
8. Add the lime juice, cilantro, and green onion before seasoning with salt and pepper to taste.

Option: Add 1 cup corn at the end.

Option: Garnish with your favourite chili toppings such as shredded cheese, avocado, cilantro, onions, jalapenos, etc.

Nutrition Facts: Calories 584, Fat 36g (Saturated 13g, Trans 0), Cholesterol 123mg, Sodium 1190mg, Carbs 45g (Fiber 8g, Sugars 6g), Protein 43g



Greek Lemon Potatoes

Prep Time: 10 minutes **Cook Time:** 40 minutes
Total Time: 50 minutes **Servings:** 6

Tasty golden brown roast potatoes with olive oil, lemon, garlic, and oregano!

ingredients

- 3 pounds potatoes (such as yukon gold), peeled and cut into wedges
- 1 1/2 cups [chicken broth](#)
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup lemon juice (~1/2 lemon)
- 5 cloves garlic, chopped or minced
- 1 tablespoon oregano
- 1 teaspoon salt

directions

1. Toss the potatoes in the mixture of the chicken broth, olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, oregano and salt, and place in a single layer in a large baking dish, along with the broth and oil mixture.
2. Bake in a preheated 400F/200C oven until the potatoes are tender and golden brown, about 40 minutes, mixing half way through.

Option: Add 1 teaspoon pepper.

Option: Add 1/2 teaspoon paprika.

Note: The broth will cook off as the potatoes roast with all of the flavours being absorbed into the potatoes!

Nutrition Facts: Calories 262, Fat 18g (Saturated 2g, Trans 0), Cholesterol 1mg, Sodium 487mg, Carbs 43g (Fiber 5g, Sugars 3g), Protein 6g



Mexican Style Black Bean Soup

Prep Time: 10 minutes **Cook Time:** 20 minutes
Total Time: 30 minutes **Servings:** 4

A smooth and creamy Mexican style black bean soup with smoky chipotles, cumin, and oregano.

ingredients

1 tablespoon oil
1 onion, diced
1 red bell pepper, diced
3 cloves garlic, chopped
2 teaspoons ground cumin
2 teaspoons smoked paprika
2 chipotle chilies in adobo sauce, chopped
4 cups [vegetable broth](#) (or beef broth or [chicken broth](#))
3 (14.5 ounce) cans black beans, drained and rinsed
1 (14.5 ounce) can diced tomatoes
1 teaspoon oregano
1 teaspoon worcestershire sauce (optional) (gluten-free for gluten-free)
1 teaspoon soy sauce (optional) (gluten-free for gluten-free)
1 tablespoon lime juice (or apple cider vinegar)
salt and pepper to taste
2 tablespoons cilantro, chopped (optional)



directions

1. Heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat, add the onion and bell pepper, and cook until tender, about 5-7 minutes.
2. Add the garlic, cumin, paprika, and chipotle chilies in adobo, and cook until fragrant, about a minute.
3. Add the broth, beans, tomatoes, oregano, worcestershire sauce, and soy sauce, bring to a boil, reduce the heat and simmer for 10 minutes.
4. Puree some, or all, of the soup with a stick blender, or in a food processor, or in a blender.
5. Add the lime juice and season with salt and pepper to taste before mixing in the cilantro and enjoying.

Option: Use 1 pound dried beans that were soaked overnight and simmered, covered, until tender (about 75 minutes), before using in step 3.

Option: Add chorizo!

Option: Add bacon!

Option: Add 1/2 cup quinoa and 1 additional cup broth, and simmer until tender, about 20 minutes before pureeing.

Option: Garnish with crumbled queso fresco or feta.

Option: Melt cheese, such as monterey jack or cheddar, into the soup!

Option: Mix sour cream or crema into the soup!

Option: Garnish with sour cream, crema, pepitas, avocado, tortilla chips, corn chips, etc.

Nutrition Facts: Calories 373, Fat 5g (Saturated 0.5g, Trans 0), Cholesterol 0, Sodium 992mg, Carbs 64g (Fiber 25g, Sugars 7g), Protein 21g

Chicken Florentine

Prep Time: 10 minutes **Cook Time:** 20 minutes
Total Time: 30 minutes **Servings:** 5

Pan seared, golden brown, chicken in a creamy spinach sauce!

ingredients

1 pound boneless skinless chicken breasts or thighs,
pounded thin
salt and pepper to taste
1/4 cup flour (optional) (gluten-free for gluten-free)
2 tablespoons olive oil (or butter)
1 shallot (or 1/4 cup onion), finely diced
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes
1/4 cup dry white wine (or [chicken broth](#))
3/4 cup [chicken broth](#)
1/2 cup heavy/whipping cream
1/2 teaspoon [Italian seasoning](#) (or oregano)
4 cups baby spinach
1/4 cup parmigiano reggiano (parmesan cheese), grated
salt and pepper to taste

directions

1. Season the chicken with salt and pepper to taste, press into the flour to coat on both sides, before shaking off any excess flour.
2. Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat, add the chicken and cook until golden brown and cooked through, about 5-7 minutes per side, before setting aside.
3. Add the shallot and cook until just tender, about 2-3 minutes.
4. Add the garlic and red pepper flakes and cook until fragrant, about a minute.
5. Add the wine, and deglaze the pan by scraping up any brown bits from the bottom of the pan as it sizzles.
6. Add the broth, cream, and Italian seasoning, bring to a boil, reduce the heat and simmer for a few minutes.
7. Reduce the heat, wait a few minutes, add the spinach and parmesan, mix, and let the spinach wilt and the cheese melt into the sauce.
8. Season with salt and pepper to taste, add the chicken and enjoy!

Option: Add bacon! (Cook it first, set aside and mix back in, crumbled, near the end.)

Option: Add sliced mushrooms! (Cook them first, set aside and mix back in, near the end.)

Option: Add sliced sundried tomatoes along with spinach!

Option: Add sliced roasted red peppers along with spinach!

Option: Add 4 ounces of cream cheese with the cream, mix and let it melt into the sauce.

Nutrition Facts: Calories 324, Fat 18g (Saturated 7g, Trans 0.2g), Cholesterol 99mg, Sodium 195mg, Carbs 10g (Fiber 0.6g, Sugars 2g), Protein 25g



Ground Beef and Barley Soup

Prep Time: 10 minutes **Cook Time:** 40 minutes
Total Time: 50 minutes **Servings:** 6

A quick and easy ground beef version of beef and barley soup with a tasty broth!

ingredients

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 cup onion, diced
- 1 cup carrot, diced
- 1 cup celery, diced
- 2 tablespoons garlic, chopped
- 1 teaspoon thyme, chopped (or 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme)
- 1/2 teaspoon rosemary, chopped (or 1/4 teaspoon dried rosemary)
- 2 teaspoons smoked paprika
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 6 cups beef broth
- 1 (14.5 ounce) can diced tomatoes
- 1 cup pearl barley (rice for gluten-free)
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce (gluten-free for gluten-free)
- 1 teaspoon fish sauce (or soy sauce) (gluten-free for gluten-free)
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 tablespoon parsley, chopped (optional)



directions

1. Cook the beef in a large saucepan over medium-high heat, breaking it apart as it cooks, before setting it aside and reserving 1 tablespoon of grease in the pan to cook the veggies in.
2. Add the onions, carrots, and celery, and cook until tender, about 7-10 minutes.
3. Add the garlic, thyme, rosemary, paprika and tomato paste and cook until fragrant, about a minute.
4. Add the broth, tomatoes, beef, barley, bay leaves, balsamic vinegar, worcestershire sauce and fish sauce, bring to a boil, reduce the heat and simmer, covered, until the barley is tender, about 20-30 minutes.
5. Remove the bay leaves, season with salt and pepper to taste, add the parsley and enjoy!

Option: Add 8 ounces mushrooms, quartered or sliced, along with the veggies.

Option: Add 1 ounce reconstituted and chopped dried mushrooms, along with the veggies.

Option: Add more veggies such as: potatoes, celery root, cabbage, bell pepper, etc.

Option: Season with [steak seasoning](#) of choice.

Option: Add parmesan cheese! (Add 1/4 cup near the end and let it melt into the broth.)

Nutrition Facts: Calories 381, Fat 16g (Saturated 6g, Trans 0.8g), Cholesterol 53mg, Sodium 714mg, Carbs 36g (Fiber 8g, Sugars 7g), Protein 23g

Skillet Chicken al Pastor

Prep Time: 10 minutes **Soak Time:** 20 minutes
Marinate Time: 20 minutes **Cook Time:** 15 minutes
Total Time: 25 minutes **Servings:** 8

A quick and easy version of al pastor using a tasty marinated chicken that's cooked in a skillet.

ingredients

- 2 dried guajillo chilies, stems and seeds removed, lightly toasted (or 1 tablespoon guajillo chili powder)
- 2 chipotle chilies in adobo sauce, chopped
- 1 (14 ounce) can pineapple, divided (liquid and pieces)
- 1 tablespoon achiote/annatto paste (optional)
- 1/2 cup onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 tablespoon lime juice (or cider vinegar)
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon oregano
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 2 pounds boneless and skinless chicken breasts or thighs, cut into bite sized pieces

directions

1. Soak the dried guajillo chilies in 1/2 cup of just boiled water until tender, about 20 minutes.
2. Puree the soaked chilies, chipotle chilies in adobo sauce, pineapple juice, achiote paste, onion, garlic, lime juice, cumin, oregano, and salt. (If the sauce is too thick, add some of the water that the chilies were soaked in.)
3. Marinate the chicken in half of the sauce for 20 minutes, covered, in the fridge, reserving the remaining sauce.
4. Heat the oil in a large skillet, shake off the excess marinade from the chicken and cook in the skillet, about 10 minutes.
5. Add the pineapple pieces and some of the reserved sauce, toss and enjoy!

Note: Do not over marinate! The pineapple in the marinade will make the chicken mushy if you let it marinate too long! 20 minutes to 2 hours is perfect!

Option: Puree some of the pineapple in the marinade along with the juices.

Option: Serve in tacos, quesadillas, burritos, etc.!

Note: I like to use canned pineapple in the marinade and fresh pineapple in the pan with chicken.

Nutrition Facts: Calories 225, Fat 6g (Saturated 0.9g, Trans 0), Cholesterol 82mg, Sodium 493mg, Carbs 14g (Fiber 1g, Sugars 10g), Protein 26g



Slow Cooker Korean Beef

Prep Time: 10 minutes **Cook Time:** 8 hours
Total Time: 8 hours 10 minutes **Servings:** 6

Sweet and tasty Korean style beef, braised in a slow cooker until it's melt in your mouth tender!

ingredients

1 (3 pound) beef roast, cut into bite sized cubes
1/4 cup soy sauce (gluten-free for gluten-free)
2 tablespoons brown sugar
2 tablespoons mirin* (optional)
1 tablespoon honey
1/4 cup pear (or apple), grated
1/4 cup onion, grated
1 tablespoon garlic, minced/grated
1 tablespoon ginger, minced/grated
1 tablespoon rice vinegar
1 tablespoon gochujang* (optional) (gluten-free for gluten-free)
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1 tablespoon cornstarch* (optional)
1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil
1 tablespoon toasted sesame seeds (optional)
2 green onions, sliced (optional)



directions

1. Place the beef in the slow cooker, mix the remaining ingredients, except the sesame oil, seeds and green onions, and cook on low for 8+ hours or on high for 4-6 hours.
2. Mix in the sesame oil, seeds and green onions and enjoy!

Note: Mirin is an Asian style sweet cooking wine that can be found in Asian grocery stores; it can be omitted.

Note: Gochujang is a Korean style chili paste that can be found in Asian grocery stores. It adds some spicy heat; you can omit it, use more for more heat, or less for less heat.

Note: The cornstarch is added to help thicken the sauce and it can be omitted.

Option: Brown the beef in oil in a pan before placing it in the slow cooker for some more flavour!

Option: Serve over rice, or pasta, or in quesadillas, tacos, etc.

Nutrition Facts: Calories 524, Fat 30g (Saturated 11g, Trans 0), Cholesterol 166mg, Sodium 811mg, Carbs 11g (Fiber 0.8g, Sugars 7g), Protein 47g

Honey Mustard Potatoes

Prep Time: 5 minutes **Cook Time:** 25 minutes
Total Time: 30 minutes **Servings:** 4

A quick and easy stovetop potato side dish in a tasty honey and mustard sauce!

ingredients

- 1 1/2 pounds baby potatoes (or potatoes cut into 1.5 inch cubes)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil (or butter)
- 1/4 cup honey
- 2 tablespoons dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons grainy mustard
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1/4 teaspoon paprika
- salt and pepper to taste

directions

1. Cover the potatoes in water in a large pot, bring to a boil and cook until just tender, about 10 minutes, before draining.
2. Heat the oil in a large skillet/pan over medium heat, add the potatoes and cook until golden brown, about 10 minutes.
3. Add the mixture of the honey, mustards, vinegar, garlic, salt, and pepper, toss to coat and cook for 2-3 minutes before enjoying!

Option: Parboil (step 1) a day ahead of time.

Option: Use your favourite mustard(s).

Option: Use your favourite vinegar.

Option: Use your favourite seasonings!

Nutrition Facts: Calories 268, Fat 7g (Saturated 1g, Trans 0), Cholesterol 0, Sodium 183mg, Carbs 48g (Fiber 4g, Sugars 18g), Protein 4g



Crispy Lemon Chicken

Prep Time: 10 minutes **Cook Time:** 10 minutes
Total Time: 20 minutes **Servings:** 4

Quick and easy crispy chicken in a light and tasty lemon sauce!

ingredients

- 1 pound boneless and skinless chicken breasts or thighs, cut into bite sized pieces
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1/2 cup cornstarch
- 2 tablespoons oil (peanut or vegetable)
- 1/4 cup [chicken broth](#) (or water)
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon lemon zest, grated
- 2 tablespoons honey (or sugar)
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce* (gluten-free for gluten-free)
- 1 tablespoon garlic, minced/grated
- 1 tablespoon ginger, minced/grated
- 1 pinch red pepper flakes
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 2 green onions, sliced

directions

1. Mix the chicken into the egg until fully coated before mixing in the cornstarch until just evenly coated.
2. Heat the oil in a pan over medium-high heat, add the chicken, separate, and cook until golden brown, about 2-4 minutes per side, before setting aside, reserving the leftover oil in the pan.
3. Add the mixture of the chicken broth, lemon juice, lemon zest, honey, soy sauce, garlic, ginger, red pepper flakes and cornstarch, to the pan and cook until the sauce thickens, about a minute, before tossing with the chicken.
4. Add green onions and enjoy!

Note: This recipe makes a balanced sweet/salty/sour sauce, if you prefer a sweeter lemon sauce, increase the honey to 4+ tablespoons.

Note: Using soy sauce will make the sauce darker. If you want a lighter yellow colour, use salt to taste instead of the soy sauce.

Option: Omit the red pepper flakes for no spicy heat; use more for more heat; use less for less heat.

Option: Replace the red pepper flakes with a chili sauce such as sambal oelek or sriracha.

Option: Add a vegetable, such as diced bell pepper, snap peas, etc., along with the chicken.

Option: Add 1 teaspoon sesame oil, at the end.

Option: Add 1 tablespoon toasted sesame seeds, at the end.

Nutrition Facts: Calories 334, Fat 11g (Saturated 1g, Trans 0), Cholesterol 123mg, Sodium 531mg, Carbs 28g (Fiber 0.5g, Sugars 9g), Protein 28g





Chicken and Rice Soup

Prep Time: 15 minutes **Cook Time:** 30 minutes
Total Time: 45 minutes **Servings:** 6

A quick and easy, light and healthy homemade chicken and rice soup!

ingredients

1 tablespoon oil
1 cup onion, diced
1 cup carrot, diced
1 cup celery, diced
3 cloves garlic, chopped
2 teaspoons thyme, chopped (or 1 teaspoon dried thyme)
8 cups [chicken broth](#) or [chicken stock](#)
1 pound boneless and skinless chicken breasts or thighs*
2 bay leaves (optional)
1 cup jasmine rice (or other long grained rice)
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 tablespoon parsley, chopped (optional)
salt and pepper to taste

directions

1. Heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium heat, add the onions, carrot, and celery, and cook until tender, about 7-10 minutes.
2. Add the garlic and thyme and cook until fragrant, about a minute.
3. Add the broth, chicken, bay leaves and rice, bring to a boil, reduce the heat and simmer, covered until the chicken is cooked through and the rice is tender, about 20 minutes.
4. Remove the chicken and bay leaf from the soup, slice or shred the chicken, and return it to the pot.
5. Add the lemon juice and parsley before seasoning with salt and pepper to taste.

Note: You want the chicken to cook in about the same amount of time as it takes to cook the rice, about 20 minutes, so slice the chicken to a maximum of 1 inch thick.

Option: Brown the chicken in oil in the saucepan before step 1.

Option: Used cooked and sliced or shredded chicken!

Option: Add 2 cups of diced potatoes along with the chicken and rice.

Option: Add 1 cup corn near the end.

Option: Add 1 cup peas near the end.

Option: Add 1/2 teaspoon turmeric.

Option: Add a pinch of cayenne.

Option: Add 1/4 cup grated parmesan, asiago, or pecorino cheese near the end.

Option: Replace the thyme with rosemary, or sage, oregano, dill, poultry seasoning, ranch seasoning, Italian seasoning, etc.

Option: Add 1/2 cup heavy/whipping cream or 4 ounces cream cheese for a creamy version!

Option: Add 1 tablespoon white miso paste at the end. (Mix it into 1/4 cup of broth from the soup before mixing it back into the soup.)

Nutrition Facts: Calories 314, Fat 8g (Saturated 1g, Trans 0), Cholesterol 64mg, Sodium 522mg, Carbs 41g (Fiber 1g, Sugars 7g), Protein 28g





Deconstructed Shepherd's Pie

Prep Time: 10 minutes **Cook Time:** 20 minutes
Total Time: 30 minutes **Servings:** 4

A quick and easy ground meat version of shepherd's pie that's great served over mashed potatoes!

ingredients

2 tablespoons oil (or butter)
1 pound ground lamb (or beef)
1 cup onion, diced
1 cup carrot, diced
2 cloves garlic, chopped
2 tablespoons tomato paste
2 tablespoons all purpose flour (gluten-free for gluten-free)
1 cup beef broth
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce (gluten-free for gluten-free)
1 teaspoon rosemary, chopped (or 1/2 teaspoon dried)
1 teaspoon thyme, chopped (or 1/2 teaspoon dried)
2 bay leaves (optional)
1 cup peas
salt and pepper to taste
4 cups [mashed potatoes](#)*, hot



directions

1. Heat the oil in a pan over medium-high heat, add the meat and cook, breaking it apart as it cooks, until cooked through, about 7-10 minutes, before setting aside and draining off all but 2 tablespoons of grease.
2. Add the onions and carrots and cook until tender, about 5-7 minutes.
3. Add the garlic and tomato paste, and mix before sprinkling in the flour, mixing again and cooking for a minute.
4. Add the broth, meat, Worcestershire sauce, rosemary, thyme, and bay leaf, bring to a simmer and cook until the sauce thickens, about 5-7 minutes.
5. Remove the bay leaves, mix in the peas, season with salt and pepper to taste and serve over mashed potatoes!

Option: Add 4 ounces of bacon! Start by cooking the bacon and set it aside optionally using 2 tablespoons of bacon grease instead of oil.

Option: Add 1 cup diced celery along with the onions.

Option: Add 1 cup diced mushrooms along with the onions.

Option: Add 1 cup corn along with the peas.

Option: Add 1 tablespoon soy sauce or fish sauce before seasoning with salt and pepper.

Option: * Use your favourite mashed potatoes! Some options: [Salt and Vinegar Mashed Potatoes](#), [White Cheddar and Garlic Mashed Potatoes](#), [Creamy Roasted Garlic Mashed Potatoes](#), [Goat Cheese Mashed Potatoes](#), [French Onion Mashed Potatoes](#), [Slow Cooker Garlic Mashed Potatoes](#), [Colcannon](#)

Nutrition Facts: Calories 590, Fat 40g (Saturated 13g, Trans 0.3g), Cholesterol 82mg, Sodium 1055mg, Carbs 54g (Fiber 7g, Sugars 8g), Protein 27g

Taco Pasta Salad

Prep Time: 15 minutes **Cook Time:** 15 minutes
Total Time: 30 minutes **Servings:** 12

A simple and tasty pasta salad with all of the flavours of tacos!

ingredients

FOR THE PASTA SALAD:

- 1 pound pasta (gluten-free for gluten-free)
- 1 pound [taco seasoned ground beef](#) (cooked)
- 1 cup tomatoes, diced
- 1 cup corn
- 1 cup black beans
- 1 cup red bell pepper, diced
- 1/4 cup red onion, diced
- 1/4 cup green onions, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup cheddar cheese, shredded
- 2 tablespoons cilantro, chopped (optional)

FOR THE EASY TACO DRESSING:

- 1/2 cup salsa
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 1 tablespoon lime juice (or apple cider vinegar)
- 1 tablespoon cilantro (optional)

directions

FOR THE PASTA SALAD:

1. Cook the pasta as directed on the package, drain and rinse in cold water until the pasta has cooled.
2. Mix the pasta, seasoned beef, tomatoes, corn, beans, red bell pepper, red onion, green onion, cheese, and cilantro.
3. Mix the salad and dressing and enjoy!

FOR THE EASY TACO DRESSING:

4. Mix the salsa, mayo, sour cream, lime juice, and cilantro.

Option: Add diced avocado!

Option: Add [guacamole](#)!

Option: Add crumbled feta!

Option: Add crumbled tortilla chips or doritos.

Nutrition Facts: Calories 374, Fat 14g (Saturated 5g, Trans 0.4g), Cholesterol 36mg, Sodium 168mg, Carbs 43g (Fiber 4g, Sugars 3g), Protein 16g



BLT Chicken Salad

Prep Time: 15 minutes **Total Time:** 15 minutes **Servings:** 8

A chicken salad inspired by BLTs with bacon and tomatoes in a creamy ranch mayonnaise dressing!

ingredients

4 cups chicken, cooked and shredded or sliced
6 strips bacon, cooked and crumbled
1 cup tomatoes, diced
1/2 cup celery, diced (optional)
1/4 cup red onion, finely diced
1/4 cup green onion, thinly sliced
1/2 cup mayonnaise (or sour cream)
1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar (or lemon juice)
1/2 teaspoon dried parsley
1/2 teaspoon dried dill
1/2 teaspoon dried chives
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
1/4 teaspoon onion powder
1/8 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper

directions

1. Mix the chicken, bacon, tomatoes, celery, red onions, and green onions.
2. Mix the mayo, vinegar, parsley, dill, chives, garlic powder, onion powder, salt, and pepper.
3. Mix the salad with the dressing and enjoy, preferably with or in lettuce!

Option: Omit the ranch spices (parsley, dill, chives, garlic powder, and onion powder) or replace them with a store bought ranch dressing mixture.

Option: Add diced avocado!

Option: Serve in lettuce boats, or in sandwiches, or in grilled cheese sandwiches!

Nutrition Facts: Calories 344, Fat 29g (Saturated 7g, Trans 0), Cholesterol 72mg, Sodium 329mg, Carbs 1g (Fiber 0.5g, Sugars 0.9g), Protein 16g



Italian Sausage Corn Chowder

Prep Time: 15 minutes **Cook Time:** 35 minutes
Total Time: 50 minutes **Servings:** 6

A warm and comforting, creamy corn and potato chowder with tasty Italian sausage!

ingredients

1 pound Italian sausage, casings removed
4 tablespoons butter
1 cup onion, diced
1 cup carrots, diced
1 cup celery, diced
3 cloves garlic, chopped
1/2 teaspoon ground fennel seeds (optional)
1 pinch red pepper flakes (optional)
4 tablespoons flour (gluten-free for gluten-free)
4 cups [chicken broth](#)
2 large potatoes, peeled and cubed
1 teaspoon oregano
1/2 teaspoon thyme
4 cups corn (fresh, frozen, or canned)
1 cup heavy/whipping cream
1/4 cup parmigiano reggiano (parmesan cheese), grated (optional)
salt and pepper to taste
2 tablespoons parsley, chopped
2 green onions, thinly sliced



directions

1. Cook the sausage in a large saucepan over medium-high heat, breaking it apart as it cooks, until cooked through, and set aside.
2. Add the butter to the pan and let it melt before adding the onion, carrots, and celery, and cooking until tender, about 7-10 minutes.
3. Add the garlic, fennel and red pepper flakes and mix before sprinkling in the flour and cooking for 2-3 minutes.
4. Add the broth, sausage, potatoes, oregano, and thyme, bring to a boil, reduce the heat and simmer until the potatoes are tender, about 15 minutes.
5. Mix in the corn, cream, and parmesan and let cheese melt into the soup before seasoning with salt and pepper to taste.
6. Mix in the parsley and green onions and enjoy!

Option: Use [Italian seasoning](#) instead of the oregano and thyme.

Option: Add bacon!

Nutrition Facts: Calories 571, Fat 51g (Saturated 24g, Trans 0.2g), Cholesterol 141mg, Sodium 935mg, Carbs 56g (Fiber 6g, Sugars 13g), Protein 24g

Slow Cooker Salsa Verde Chicken

Prep Time: 10 minutes **Cook Time:** 8 hours
Total Time: 8 hours 10 minutes **Servings:** 8

Super simple slow cooker pulled chicken in a tasty salsa verde sauce!

ingredients

2 pounds boneless and skinless chicken breasts or thighs
2 cups [salsa verde](#)
1 (4 ounce) can chopped green chiles
1 jalapeno, seeded and diced
1 onion, diced
4 cloves garlic, chopped
1 teaspoon ground cumin
4 green onions, thinly sliced (optional)
1/4 cup cilantro, chopped (optional)
1 tablespoon lime juice (optional)

directions

1. Place the chicken in a slow cooker with the mixture of the salsa verde, green chilies, jalapeno, onion, garlic, and cumin and cook on low for 8-10 hours, or on high for 4-6 hours.
2. Pull/shred the chicken, mix it back into the sauce along with the green onions, cilantro, and lime juice, and enjoy!

Tip: Make tacos with tortillas, onions, cilantro, avocado and cheese!

Option: Mix in 1/2 cup crema or sour cream after cooking.

Option: Add 1 cup corn, after cooking.

Option: Add 1 (14.5 ounce) can white beans, rinsed and drained, after cooking.

Nutrition Facts: Calories 174, Fat 3g (Saturated 0.6g, Trans 0), Cholesterol 82mg, Sodium 653mg, Carbs 7g (Fiber 1g, Sugars 3g), Protein 26g





Salsa Verde Chicken Enchiladas

Prep Time: 15 minutes **Cook Time:** 15 minutes
Total Time: 30 minutes **Servings:** 4

Salsa verde chicken rolled up in tortillas and smothered in salsa and melted cheese!

ingredients

1 cup [salsa verde](#)
3 cups cooked [salsa verde chicken](#)
8 (8 inch) tortillas (gluten-free for gluten-free)
2 cups Monterey Jack cheese (or cheddar), shredded

directions

1. Spread half of the salsa over the bottom of a 13x9 inch baking pan.
2. Divide the chicken between the tortillas, roll them up and place them in the baking pan.
3. Pour the remaining salsa over the enchiladas and sprinkle on the cheese before baking in a preheated 350F/180C oven until the cheese has melted and the sides are bubbling, about 10-15 minutes.

Option: Garnish with cilantro.

Option: Garnish with onions.

Option: Garnish with avocado.

Option: Garnish with jalapeno.

Option: Garnish with sour cream.

Nutrition Facts: Calories 513, Fat 34g (Saturated 15g, Trans 0), Cholesterol 129mg, Sodium 977mg, Carbs 25g (Fiber 4g, Sugars 2g), Protein 36g





Chopped Cheese Sandwiches

Prep Time: 10 minutes **Cook Time:** 20 minutes

Total Time: 30 minutes **Servings:** 4

Sandwiches filled with hot beef, melted cheese, lettuce, tomato and your favourite sandwich fillings!

ingredients

- 1 tablespoon oil (or butter or lard)
- 1 cup onion, diced
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce (optional) (gluten-free for gluten-free)
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce (optional) (gluten-free for gluten-free)
- 4 slices American cheese
- 4 hoagies/buns/rolls, cut in half (optionally toasted) (gluten-free for gluten-free)
- 4 tablespoon mayonnaise
- 2 cups lettuce, shredded
- 1 large tomato, thinly sliced
- 4 teaspoons hot sauce (optional)



directions

1. Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat, add the onions and cook until tender, about 5 minutes, before setting aside.
2. Place the ground beef into the pan, press it down into the pan, sprinkle on the garlic powder, salt and pepper and let it cook until the bottom turns a deep golden brown, about 5-8 minutes.
3. Flip the beef, press it into the pan, and cook until deep golden brown, about 5-8 minutes.
4. Chop the beef to break it apart, add the onion, soy sauce, and Worcestershire sauce, and cook until the beef is cooked.
5. Place the slices of cheese on top of the beef and let it melt before turning off the heat.
6. Divide the chopped cheese beef between the hoagies, along with the mayo, lettuce, tomato, and hot sauce, and enjoy!

Note: You can use ground beef or beef burger patties.

Option: Season the beef to taste! Adobo seasoning is the classic, and [Montreal steak seasoning](#) also works well.

Option: Use your favourite sandwich fillers: ketchup, mustard, pickles, pickled peppers, pickled jalapenos, etc.

Nutrition Facts: Calories 589, Fat 45g (Saturated 14g, Trans 1g), Cholesterol 99mg, Sodium 1077mg, Carbs 39g (Fiber 2g, Sugars 4g), Protein 30g



Italian Salad Dressing

Prep Time: 5 minutes **Total Time:** 5 minutes
Servings: 16 (~1 cup or 16 1 tablespoon servings)

An easy and tasty homemade Italian style salad dressing.

ingredients

1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
1/2 cup red wine vinegar
2 teaspoons dijon mustard (optional)
1 teaspoon honey (or sugar) (optional)
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1/2 teaspoon dried basil
1/2 teaspoon dried parsley
1/2 teaspoon powdered garlic
1/2 teaspoon powdered onion
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)
2 tablespoons parmigiano reggiano (parmesan cheese),
grated (optional)

directions

1. Mix everything well!



Note: I like more acidity in my dressings so I go with 1/2 oil and 1/2 vinegar ratio where a more typical ratio is 2/3 oil and 1/3 vinegar. Adjust to taste!

Note: Mustard is not necessarily traditional but I like to add it to help emulsify the dressing.

Option: Replace some or all of the red wine vinegar with white wine vinegar or lemon juice.

Option: Replace all of the dried herbs with 2 teaspoons of your favourite [Italian seasoning blend](#).

Option: Replace some or all of the grated parmesan with pecorino, or asiago cheese.

Option: Store bought Italian dressing often includes red bell pepper and you can add 1 tablespoon finely chopped [roasted red bell pepper](#).

Option: Add 1 tablespoon of finely chopped sundried tomatoes!

Option: Add 1/2 teaspoon ground fennel seeds.

Option: Add 2 tablespoons mayonnaise for a creamy version!

Option: Use 2 cloves of garlic, minced or grated instead of the powdered garlic.

Option: Add 2 tablespoons of fresh chopped parsley.

Note: Store in a sealed container in the fridge and use within a few days.

Nutrition Facts: Calories 68, Fat 7g (Saturated 1g, Trans 0), Cholesterol 0.8mg, Sodium 39mg,
Carbs 0.6g (Fiber 0, Sugars 0.4g), Protein 0.4g

Slow Cooker Chicken Shawarma

Prep Time: 10 minutes **Cook Time:** 8 hours
Total Time: 8 hours 10 minutes **Servings:** 8

A super easy slow cooker version of chicken shawarma where the chicken is slow cooked in shawarma seasoning before being shredded!

ingredients

FOR THE SLOW COOKER CHICKEN SHAWARMA:

2 pounds boneless and skinless chicken breasts or thighs
1 large onion, sliced (optional)
2 tablespoons shawarma seasoning
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons lemon juice
4 cloves garlic, grated/minced
1/4 cup water (or chicken broth)

FOR THE SHAWARMA SEASONING:

1/2 tablespoon oregano
1/2 tablespoon ground cumin
1/2 tablespoon ground coriander
1/2 tablespoon paprika
1/4 teaspoon turmeric powder
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/8 teaspoon ground allspice
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper

directions

FOR THE SLOW COOKER CHICKEN SHAWARMA:

1. Place the chicken and onion in a slow cooker, pour over the mixture of the shawarma seasoning, oil, lemon juice, garlic, and water, and cook on low for 8 hours or on high for 2-3 hours.
2. Remove the chicken, shred/pull, mix back into the juices and enjoy!

FOR THE SHAWARMA SEASONING:

3. Mix everything well!

Option: Serve in pitas with your favourite gyro fillings such as: lettuce, tomato, cucumber, fresh or [pickled red onions](#), fresh or [pickled jalapenos](#), olives, feta, [shawarma sauce](#), sriracha, etc.

Nutrition Facts: Calories 185, Fat 6g (Saturated 1g, Trans 0), Cholesterol 82mg, Sodium 126mg, Carbs 4g (Fiber 1g, Sugars 0.9g), Protein 26g





Cincinnati Chili

Prep Time: 10 minutes **Cook Time:** 2 hours
Total Time: 10 minutes **Servings:** 6

A Cincinnati-style chili (a Mediterranean-spiced meat sauce) that's perfect served over spaghetti or as a hot dog topping!

ingredients

1 (5.5 ounce) can tomato paste
4 cups beef broth (or water)
2 pounds ground beef*
1 large onion, diced
4 cloves garlic, chopped
3 tablespoons chili powder (such as ancho chili powder)
1 tablespoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground allspice
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
1 bay leaf
2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce (optional) (gluten-free for gluten-free)
1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
1 tablespoon brown sugar
salt and pepper to taste



directions

1. Mix the tomato paste into the broth in a large saucepan, over medium heat, add the ground beef and break it apart.
2. Add the onion, garlic, chili powder, cumin, cinnamon, allspice, cloves, bay leaf, Worcestershire sauce, vinegar, and brown sugar, mix well, bring to a boil, reduce the heat and simmer for 2 hours, before skimming off any fat if desired.*
3. Remove the bay leaf and season with salt and pepper to taste!

Note: *Since the ground beef is cooked directly in the broth, there is no opportunity to drain off the grease, so you may want to skim the fat off of the top as it cooks. Another option is to cook the chili the day before and place the whole pot in the fridge overnight where the fat will float to the top and solidify, making it easy to lift off. Medium ground beef will have both more flavour and more fat, and lean or extra lean ground beef will have less flavour and less fat.

Option: Add 1 teaspoon paprika.

Option: Add 1 tablespoon soy sauce.

Option: Add 1 teaspoon unsweetened cocoa powder or 1/2 ounce dark chocolate at the very end.

Option: Add 4 ounces of diced bacon.

Option: Serve over spaghetti!

Option: Serve topped with diced onions!

Option: Serve topped with red kidney beans!

Option: Serve topped with shredded cheddar cheese!

Nutrition Facts: Calories 416, Fat 31g (Saturated 11g, Trans 1g), Cholesterol 107mg, Sodium 814mg, Carbs 15g (Fiber 3g, Sugars 7g), Protein 31g



Mediterranean Salad

Prep Time: 15 minutes **Total Time:** 15 minutes **Servings:** 4

A quick and easy Mediterranean style salad with finely diced cucumber, tomatoes and onion.

ingredients

2 cups cucumber, finely diced
2 cups tomato, finely diced
1/4 cup red onion, finely diced
1 tablespoon parsley, chopped (or cilantro, or mint, or basil)
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons lemon juice (or red wine vinegar)
salt and pepper to taste

directions

1. Mix everything and enjoy!

Nutrition Facts: Calories 86, Fat 6g (Saturated 0.8g, Trans 0), Cholesterol 0, Sodium 5mg, Carbs 6g (Fiber 1g, Sugars 3g), Protein 1g



20 Minute Light Honey Garlic Chicken

Prep Time: 5 minutes **Cook Time:** 15 minutes

Total Time: 20 minutes **Servings:** 4

Quick and easy, bite sized pieces of chicken sauteed in a honey garlic sauce!

ingredients

- 1 pound boneless and skinless chicken breasts or thighs, cut into bite sized pieces
- 1 tablespoon oil (peanut or vegetable)
- 1/3 cup honey
- 2 tablespoons garlic, chopped
- 1/3 cup [chicken broth](#) (or water)
- 1 tablespoon rice wine vinegar (or apple cider vinegar, or white vinegar)
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce (gluten-free for gluten-free)
- 1 pinch red pepper flakes (optional)
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1 tablespoon butter (optional)

directions

1. Heat the oil in a pan over medium-high heat, add the chicken, and cook until golden brown, about 2-4 minutes per side.
2. Meanwhile, mix the honey, garlic, broth, vinegar, soy sauce, red pepper flakes, and cornstarch.
3. Add the sauce mixture to the pan, bring it to a boil and simmer until it thickens a bit, about a minute.
4. Add the butter and let it melt into the sauce before enjoying!

Tip: Steam rice while you make the honey garlic chicken and it will be done at about the same time!

Option: Add a vegetable such as bell pepper, snap peas, sugar peas, broccoli, etc.

Option: Add 1 teaspoon sesame oil, at the end.

Option: Add 1 tablespoon toasted sesame seeds, at the end.

Nutrition Facts: Calories 302, Fat 9g (Saturated 2g, Trans 0), Cholesterol 91mg, Sodium 301mg, Carbs 27g (Fiber 0, Sugars 23g), Protein 26g





Oklahoma Onion Burgers

Prep Time: 5 minutes **Cook Time:** 10 minutes

Total Time: 15 minutes **Servings:** 4

Easy to make smashed burgers with caramelized onions!
So simple! So good!

ingredients

20 ounces ground beef*
salt and pepper to taste
1 large onion, thinly sliced
4 slices cheese (American or cheddar)
4 buns (gluten-free for gluten-free)

directions

1. Divide the beef into 8 equal portions and form into balls.
2. Heat a heavy bottomed pan/skillet over medium-high heat, place the balls into the pan, smash them down to about 1/3 inch thick, and season with salt and pepper to taste. (You may need to do this in batches.)
3. Spread the onions on top and let the beef cook until the beef gets golden brown and caramelized before flipping.
4. Let the onions cook until they start to get tender, about 1 minute, place the cheese on top, followed by the buns, cover, and let cook until the onions start to brown, 1-2 minutes.
5. Assemble the burgers and enjoy!

Note: *This recipe makes 4 burgers with 2 2.5 ounce patties in each burger.

Tip: Slice the onions thinly using a mandoline.

Option: Place the sliced onions in a wire mesh strainer, mix with some salt, and let it sit for 30 minutes before squeezing out the excess moisture and patting dry. This helps remove moisture from the onions and lets them caramelize quicker.

Option: Add your favourite condiments such as: mustard, pickles, etc.

Nutrition Facts: Calories 610, Fat 39g (Saturated 16g, Trans 1g), Cholesterol 128mg, Sodium 495mg, Carbs 26g (Fiber 1g, Sugars 4g), Protein 35g





Creamy Parmesan Cajun Chicken Pasta Soup

Prep Time: 10 minutes **Cook Time:** 20 minutes
Total Time: 30 minutes **Servings:** 6

A tasty chicken noodle (pasta) soup with a cajun seasoned creamy parmesan broth!

ingredients

1 tablespoon oil
1 pound boneless and skinless chicken breasts or thighs
1 teaspoon [cajun seasoning](#)
1 tablespoon butter
1 cup onion, diced
1 cup celery, diced
1 cup bell pepper, diced
4 cloves garlic, chopped
1 teaspoon thyme, chopped
1 tablespoon [cajun seasoning](#)
6 cups [chicken broth](#)
1 (14.5 ounce) can diced tomatoes (optional)
1 tablespoon worcestershire sauce (gluten-free for gluten-free)
8 ounces of pasta (such as ditalini or shells) (gluten-free for gluten-free)
1/2 cup heavy/whipping cream (optional)
1/3 cup parmigiano reggiano (parmesan cheese), grated
1 tablespoon lemon juice (optional)
2 tablespoons parsley, chopped (optional)
2 green onions, thinly sliced (optional)
cayenne, salt and pepper to taste

directions

1. Heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat, add the chicken, seasoned with the cajun seasoning, and cook until golden brown, about 2-4 minutes per side, before setting aside.
2. Melt the butter in the same saucepan before adding the onion, celery and bell pepper and cooking until tender, about 5-7 minutes.
3. Add the garlic, thyme, and cajun seasoning, and cook until fragrant, about a minute.
4. Add the broth, chicken, diced tomatoes, worcestershire sauce, and pasta, bring to a boil, reduce the heat and simmer until the pasta is al-dente tender, about 7 minutes.
5. Remove the chicken, slice or shred it, and return it to the pot.
6. Turn off the heat, add the cream and parmesan, mix and let the cheese melt into the broth.
7. Add the lemon juice, parsley and green onions, and season with cayenne, salt and pepper to taste before enjoying!

Option: Add 4 ounces cream cheese, warmed, along with the parmesan.

Option: Add 8 ounces andouille sausage, sliced or diced and browned.

Nutrition Facts: Calories 498, Fat 19g (Saturated 8g, Trans 0), Cholesterol 100mg, Sodium 553mg, Carbs 46g (Fiber 4g, Sugars 10g), Protein 32g



Apple Chicken Skillet

Prep Time: 10 minutes **Cook Time:** 20 minutes
Total Time: 30 minutes **Servings:** 4

A quick and easy chicken skillet with apples in a creamy sauce.

ingredients

salt and pepper to taste
1 pound boneless skinless chicken breasts or thighs,
pounded thin
2 tablespoons flour (gluten-free for gluten-free)
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 large onion, thinly sliced
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 teaspoon thyme, chopped (or 1/2 teaspoon dried
thyme)
1 teaspoon rosemary, chopped (or 1/2 teaspoon dried
rosemary)
1 pinch ground cinnamon (optional)
1/2 cup [chicken broth](#) (or white wine)
1/2 cup apple cider (soft) (or apple juice)
1/4 cup heavy/whipping cream
1/2 tablespoon dijon mustard
1/2 tablespoon grainy mustard
1/2 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
2 tablespoons maple syrup (or brown sugar)
2 large apples, cored and cut into thick slices



directions

1. Season the chicken with salt and pepper, dust in the flour and shake off the excess.
2. Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat, add the chicken and cook until golden brown, about 4-6 minutes per side, before setting aside.
3. Add the onion to the pan and cook until tender, about 5 minutes.
4. Add the garlic, thyme, rosemary, and cinnamon, and cook until fragrant, about a minute.
5. Add the broth, apple cider, cream, mustards, and maple syrup, mix, add the chicken and apples, bring to a boil, reduce the heat and simmer for 5 minutes.

Option: Add 1 cup cranberries with the apples.

Option: Add cheddar cheese! Either melt it into the sauce or sprinkle on as garnish!

Option: Add bacon!

Nutrition Facts: Calories 360, Fat 12g (Saturated 4g, Trans 0), Cholesterol 100mg, Sodium 146mg, Carbs 34g (Fiber 3g, Sugars 23g), Protein 28g



About Nutrition Facts

The nutritional facts were calculated using automated tools and they should be considered to be estimates. If you have any dietary requirements based on the nutrition facts you should calculate them yourself using a trusted source, using the nutrition facts of the ingredients and brands of products that you use in the recipes.

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