
THE GREEN KITCHEN

RECIPES FOR A BETTER PLANET

HOW TO SHOP AND COOK IN AN
ENERGY-EFFICIENT,
ENVIRONMENTALLY
RESPONSIBLE WAY



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH **Fresher**
for Longer

USEFUL WEBSITES

British Retail Consortium – www.brc.org.uk

The British Retail Consortium is the lead trade association for the retail sector and the authoritative voice of all parts of the industry

Food & Drink Federation – www.fdf.org.uk

The Food and Drink Federation is the voice of the UK food and drink industry, the largest manufacturing sector in the country

Global Action Plan – www.globalactionplan.org.uk

Global Action Plan is the UK's leading environmental behaviour change charity and, since 1993, has helped businesses, schools and communities reduce their impact on the environment

Love Food Hate Waste – www.lovefoodhatewaste.com

Love Food Hate Waste is a WRAP campaign that raises awareness of the need to reduce food waste

INCPEN – www.incpen.org

INCPEN researches the environmental and social effects of packaging and packaged goods. Its members are an influential group of manufacturers and retailers who collaborate to help consumers live more sustainably

Kent Resource Partnership – www.kent.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/recycling_and_rubbish/kent_resource_partnership.aspx

The Kent Resource Partnership (KRP) is a partnership between Kent's district and borough councils and Kent County Council

The Packaging Federation – www.packagingfedn.co.uk

The Packaging Federation is the 'over-arching' trade association for the UK Packaging Manufacturing Industry

WRAP – www.wrap.org.uk

WRAP works with businesses, individuals and communities to help them reap the benefits of reducing waste, developing sustainable products and using resources in an efficient way.

CONTENTS

HOW TO BE A GREENER SHOPPER 4-7

Getting there	4
Making your choice	5
Carrier bags	6
The energy used to feed us	6
The energy in your loaf	6
Health & safety	7
Prepared & loose foods	7

STORING FOOD 8-10

What to store in the fridge	8
Making the best use of the fridge & freezer	9
Storing food after opening	10
The store cupboard	10

COOKING TO AVOID FOOD WASTE 11-12

Kitchen equipment	12
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CLEARING UP 13-14

Food waste	13
Washing up	13
Recycling & recovery	14

FUTURE TRENDS 15-16

Then....	15
...And now	15
What next...?	16

RECIPES 17-31

HOW TO BE A GREENER SHOPPER

How, when and where we do grocery shopping and what we buy depends on who we are and how we live, whether we have a big family or live alone, own a car or use the bus.

Lots of us now use a combination of shopping methods.. 

On-line for basics like pet food, loo rolls, detergents, cereals and cleaning materials, and heavy items like wine.

Traditional shopping for things we want to choose ourselves like meat, fruit and vegetables, bread and cakes which we might buy from supermarkets, farmers' markets or local specialist shops like butchers, bakers and greengrocers.

Or **Click and collect**, a combination of the two where orders are placed online but goods are delivered to a local store for collection.

GETTING THERE

- Walk to local shops: fewer car emissions and good exercise! Take the car if you have far to go, need to do the weekly shop or are pushed for time. Plan your shopping trip.
- Make a shopping list to avoid having to make a second visit sooner than necessary.
- If you can, shop when the roads are less busy, to avoid sitting in traffic jams. The shops are less likely to be crowded then too.
- Car share with a friend or neighbour.



Food waste has a huge negative impact because it wastes not only the food itself but the energy, water, materials, money and time used to produce it. **Reduce Waste. Buy Packaged.**



MAKING YOUR CHOICE

Buying in bulk reduces the ratio of packaging to goods - but it only makes sense if you can use all of it before it goes off. If you decide not to eat something before its 'use by' date, freeze it until you want it.

★

Buy a small amount from the deli counter if pre-packed portions are too big. Deli food uses more packaging (for wrapping food overnight, and it needs to be wrapped for taking home) but you can buy just what you need. And eat deli food soon because it won't keep as long as pre-packed foods.

★

Buy local fruit and vegetables in season. And thanks to packaging you can have imported foods - like bananas, oranges, tea and coffee - and seasonal foods like strawberries and peas all year round.

★

If you have storage space, buy things like toilet rolls and soap powder in bulk. It may be cheaper in larger sizes as well as using less packaging.

★

If you're not going to use fresh food within a couple of days, reduce waste by buying packaged food as the packaging will help it to last longer at home.

★

Buy things to suit your needs. If you eat a lot of strawberry jam buy a large jar. If you live alone and want a range of flavours, buy small portions. Even though small portions use more packaging, the jam won't get wasted.

★

Only buy fresh food if you can use it while it's at its best. Otherwise it's better to buy frozen, canned or bottled - which often have a higher nutrient value because they are packed within hours of being harvested or caught.

www.goodbadspudly.com

See the "dead good facts" in the Good, the Bad and the Spudly.



CARRIER BAGS

Re-use all types of shopping bags. If you forget your own bags or need more, use the shop's thin plastic ones and then be sure to re-use them on another shopping trip, or to line rubbish bins, carry wet swimwear or dirty sports shoes.

A major study *Lifecycle Assessment of Supermarket Carrier Bags from the Environment Agency* concluded that thin plastic carrier bags are an environmentally responsible way for consumers to carry groceries home and have less environmental impact than other bags.

Some countries make shops charge for plastic bags but this can have unintended consequences because people then have to buy tailor made rubbish bin bags which use more plastic.

Don't feel guilty about using – and re-using – thin plastic carriers.

THE ENERGY USED TO FEED US

Different types of energy are used to get food from farm to fork - fuel to power the tractor to plant and harvest the field, fertiliser to make crops grow, energy to make packaging, petrol to drive lorries and cars, electricity to run freezers, fridges and cookers.



50% of the energy used to produce and get food to our plates is used in food production and processing
30% is used by us to drive to the shops and store and cook food
10% in transport to the shop and retailing
10% to make the packaging

THE ENERGY IN YOUR LOAF

If you throw away part of a loaf, you waste not just the bread and your money but also the energy and water used to grow a field of wheat, and the energy and materials used to make, pack and transport the loaf.

Buy a smaller loaf, or freeze the fresh loaf and just thaw a slice or two when you need it.



HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Read the label. Most packs have symbols to show calories, fat, sugar and salt levels and how much that represents of the recommended daily amount.
- Check and respect 'use by' dates. Eat it, freeze it or throw it. Some labels say 'freeze on the day of purchase' but it is ok to freeze food right up to the 'use by' date.
- 'Best before' means food is still safe to eat after the date. It just may not be at its best, bread may be a bit stale but don't throw it away – either eat it or freeze it.
- Take frozen and chilled foods home quickly, and store them correctly to keep them safe to eat. See page 9 for correct temperatures.
- Good hygiene is vital in the kitchen. Always wash your hands before handling food.
- Avoid foods which are bruised or damaged.
- Avoid food with damaged packaging.

PREPARED AND LOOSE FOODS

- Don't feel guilty about buying prepared foods. It doesn't just save time and effort; it also generates less waste, despite the packaging!
- Packaging food in the field or factory allows the preparation waste (vegetable peelings, fat, skins) to be used for other foods or animal feed.
- Prepared foods (fish fingers or apple pies) take up less space in transport so reduce transport energy compared to raw ingredients (fish and apples) and are easier to handle.
- Less than 1% of prepared food is damaged on the journey from factory to shop, while up to 20% of raw ingredients go to waste.



There's 27% more waste from bruised apples sold 'loose' than from those sold in a tray with a cover.



STORING FOOD

Fridges and freezers keep food fresh for longer (because bacteria love warm conditions). Keeping food cool helps keep it safe to eat. Canning and drying food also ensures that it is wholesome and good to eat and it doesn't have to be kept cold.

Keep a stock of dried, canned and frozen foods to supplement and extend fresh foods. Without a freezer peas would only be available for a couple of weeks in summer.

WHAT TO STORE IN THE FRIDGE

- Shops put the most recent deliveries at the back of the shelf, so the oldest items are sold first. Do the same in your fridge and store cupboard.
- Don't put hot food in your fridge as the fridge motor will have to work harder to lower the temperature again. It will also warm other food in the fridge which can make it go off.
- Store eggs in the fridge to avoid the fluctuating temperatures of the kitchen. Throw away any broken or cracked eggs as they may not be safe to eat; they can go in your food waste collection if your council offers one.
- Keep fruit like apples, grapes and citrus fruit in the fridge. They will keep much longer. But not bananas or whole pineapples – they hate the cold.

MAKING BEST USE OF THE FRIDGE AND FREEZER

Don't put fridges and freezers next to the cooker or boiler, as the heat will make the motor work twice as hard.

*

Don't leave the doors of fridges and freezers open. Check the seal is working properly by putting a piece of paper in the door and making sure it stays there when the door is shut.

*

There needs to be room for cold air to circulate in a fridge, so don't pack it too tight. In contrast, a freezer uses less energy and works more efficiently when it is full because the frozen items help keep the temperature down.

*

If you have a separate freezer, you could buy a fridge which doesn't have a freezer compartment. It uses less energy so is cheaper to run.

*

A fridge should run at 5°C or below; a freezer at -18°C. Keep thermometers in both to make sure.

*

Upright freezers use more energy than chest freezers because every time the door is opened, cold air is lost. A freezer which has to be defrosted manually uses a third less energy than one with an automatic defrost system (as long as it is kept defrosted - be sure to do that regularly).

*

Fridges and freezers use lots of energy, so when you buy a new one, check the energy label and choose the most energy-efficient you can afford – it'll cost less to run.

*

Choose the right size: if you live alone, don't buy a huge freezer that will run half empty.

STORING FOOD AFTER OPENING

- Once you have opened canned food, put any uneaten food into a sealable plastic or glass container before storing it in the fridge.
- Once you have defrosted food, or opened a long-life pack, treat it as fresh and follow storage instructions.
- Keep raw meat in its packaging because the special air in the pack keeps it fresher for longer.
- If you buy raw meat from the butchers cover it and store it at the bottom of the fridge so it can't drip on other food.



THE STORE CUPBOARD

Keep some long-life options that can be stored at room temperature in the store cupboard. Most foods packed in cans, glass jars and dried pasta and rice in bags keep for years. Tinned tomatoes, baked beans and tuna are fast foods for a quick meal.

There are some rice and pasta salads in a can that keep as long as 2 years.



COOKING TO AVOID FOOD WASTE

If you live alone, cook several portions at once and freeze them. It uses less energy to cook one large portion than several small ones.



A big joint of meat may seem extravagant but the left-overs make more meals:

- slices of cold meat with salad
- mince lamb mixed with carrots and onions for a shepherds pie
- rissoles made from mince, mixed with breadcrumbs (made from left-over bread) and a finely chopped onion

Serve meals on smaller plates. It will force you to serve less food. Reduces waste and waists!

Hate cooking, or just need a night off? Eat out! Restaurants cook in larger quantities so each meal is prepared using less energy and generating less waste than meals cooked for one or just a few people.



Use left-over food up quickly. Otherwise freeze it or store it in the fridge, covered, for no more than 2 days.



Eat raw foods (salads, carrots, cauliflower, fruit and nuts). It saves energy, avoids washing up and is good for you.



KITCHEN EQUIPMENT

- Gas cookers are more than three times more energy-efficient than electric ones. Microwave ovens use even less energy because they heat just the food, not the space around it.
- Basic tools like sharp knives, whisks and manual juicers work just as well as electric ones, are much easier to wash up and save you money because they don't use electricity.
- Simmer vegetables and rice with the lid on, so food cooks quicker and uses less energy.
- When vegetables are boiled, some of the nutrients are lost in the water which is often thrown away. Steaming or microwaving vegetables help reduce nutrient loss as well as using less energy and water.
- Boil just the amount of water you need for the number of drinks you want to make - don't fill the kettle if you're making a drink for one. Jug style kettles use less energy because they have smaller elements.
- Just because your kettle has an automatic switch-off, don't walk away while the kettle boils and then have to boil it up again.
- If you're having a barbecue, buy British charcoal to support forestry ventures.
- Slow cookers use less energy to make casseroles and stews. And you can buy cheaper cuts of meat.



CLEARING UP

FOOD WASTE

- Food waste is an environmental disaster and, as a country, we throw away more food waste than used packaging.
- The Prudential's Soggy Lettuce Report, published in 2004, found that each person in the UK wastes £424 worth of food each year - 61% of people admit to throwing away lettuce, 50% frozen food, 48% take-away food and 17% an unfinished bottle of wine.
- Government Agency WRAP agreed with these findings and has produced lots of advice about reducing food waste in its **Love Food Hate Waste** campaign. An associated campaign, **Fresher for Longer** explains how packaging helps reduce food waste. See 'Storage' on **Love Food Hate Waste** website.
- Packaging protects food and helps it keep fresher for longer. That's a net environmental benefit because growing, processing and delivering food uses 10 times more resources than those resources used to make packaging.
- Avoid wasting food by buying packaged goods if you find food sold loose goes off before you can eat it.

WASHING UP

- Concentrated washing up liquids are good because they use smaller bottles so they take up less space and more can be fitted in fewer lorries. But if you buy concentrates, don't use too much.
- Only run a dishwasher when it's completely full.





RECYCLING & RECOVERY

- Support your local recycling schemes. If your council has a kerbside collection scheme, put out only the recyclables it accepts. Take other recyclables to a recycling point next time you go.
- Don't expect to recycle everything – sticky food wrappers are not worth the effort, energy and money needed to recycle them. Put them in the rubbish bin where value can still be recovered. Over 20% of household rubbish is now treated to recover energy. And gas recovered from landfilled waste is used to generate electricity.
- Re-use some packaging for storage and other jobs around the house: yoghurt pots for growing seedlings, plastic bottles as mini-greenhouses.
- If you have a garden you can put vegetable peelings and food scraps (not meat or fish because they will attract rodents) in a compost heap. Then you can use your own compost to grow vegetables.
- Even if you don't grow your own vegetables, taking skins and peelings out of the dustbin makes managing the rest of the waste easier – it's the vegetable peelings and similar wastes that rot and give off climate change gases in landfills. Some councils collect food waste separately to avoid this problem.



FUTURE TRENDS

In an earlier edition of The Green Kitchen (published in 2007) we tried to guess how we would be shopping and cooking in future. Six years on, as we predicted, many more of us use the Internet to order goods and either use click-and-collect or home delivery. Shopping at farmers' markets and in local artisan butchers and bakers has also increased.

THEN...

In the 1930s a household typically spent two and a half hours a day shopping and preparing food. By the 1970s, with the introduction of prepared foods, this went down to half an hour and today with home delivery some households spend only 8 minutes!

The biggest changes in shopping habits happened in the 1960s when more women went out to work. This meant it was often not possible to shop daily so there was a shift to doing one major weekly shop. So food had to keep for longer and it stimulated a rapid development in new packaging.

During the week there was less time to prepare meals from scratch so demand for prepared packaged foods grew.



...AND NOW

Today there's growing interest in how food is produced and processed, and in health and nutrition. People want fewer additives in processed food which means the barrier properties and the protection provided by the packaging needs to increase.

Ethical concerns continue to rise and there are a growing number of Fairtrade products.

Eating outside the home and on-the-go continues to increase.

Going shopping can provide those who live alone with a chance to meet other people.

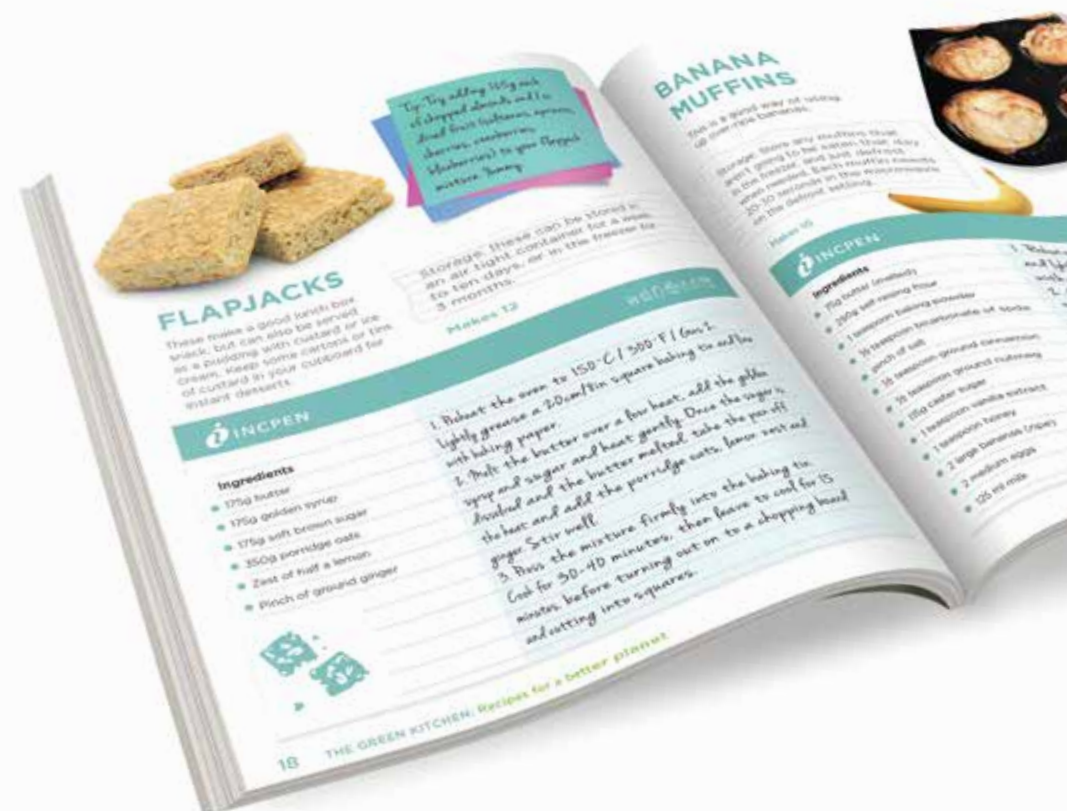


WHAT NEXT?

- Some liquids - detergents and fruit squashes - are concentrated to reduce their volume and packaging. Perhaps other liquids could be?
- There are likely to be more smaller portion packs, because there are more single person households and even in families people often eat separately.
- Will there be more portion sizes, like 100 calorie packs, to help people avoid eating too many calories?
- There are new homes in New York which have no kitchens at all - aimed at young professionals who eat every meal out. Will this catch on?
- Barcode-reading fridges may become popular to enable automated ordering of items - and even remind us what needs eating up.
- Will we be able to use our phone to 'self-checkout'?
- Will new online companies which supply recipes and all the measured ingredients direct to home catch on?
- An ageing population means packs need to be easier to handle and open and labels easier to read. 'Inclusive' design like this would benefit everyone.

Predicting the future is never easy. What can be guaranteed is that we will continue to demand a wide variety of goods - from essentials like staple foods to luxury items like fancy boxes of chocolates and alcohol.

RECIPES



These quick and simple recipes, using fresh and store cupboard ingredients, are designed just for you and will produce tasty healthy meals.



Tip: Try adding 125g each of chopped almonds and / or dried fruit (sultanas, apricots, cherries, cranberries, blueberries) to your flapjack mixture. Yummy.

FLAPJACKS

These make a good lunch box snack, but can also be served as a pudding with custard or ice cream. Keep some cartons or tins of custard in your cupboard for instant desserts.

Storage: these can be stored in an air tight container for a week to ten days, or in the freezer for 3 months.

Makes 12

 INCPEN



Ingredients

- 175g butter
- 175g golden syrup
- 175g soft brown sugar
- 350g porridge oats
- Zest of half a lemon
- Pinch of ground ginger

1. Preheat the oven to 150°C / 300°F / Gas 2. Lightly grease a 20cm/8in square baking tin and line with baking paper.
2. Melt the butter over a low heat, add the golden syrup and sugar and heat gently. Once the sugar is dissolved and the butter melted, take the pan off the heat and add the porridge oats, lemon zest and ginger. Stir well.
3. Press the mixture firmly into the baking tin. Cook for 30-40 minutes, then leave to cool for 15 minutes, before turning out on to a chopping board and cutting into squares.



BANANA MUFFINS

This is a good way of using up over-ripe bananas.

Storage: Store any muffins that aren't going to be eaten that day in the freezer, and just defrost when needed. Each muffin needs 20-30 seconds in the microwave on the defrost setting.

Makes 10



 INCPEN



Ingredients

- 75g butter (melted)
- 250g self-raising flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
- pinch of salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 115g caster sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon honey
- 2 large bananas (ripe)
- 2 medium eggs
- 125 ml milk

1. Preheat oven to 190°C / 375°F / Gas 5 and lightly grease a muffin tin or line with muffin cases.
2. Melt butter and leave to cool.
3. Mash the bananas thoroughly
4. Put flour, baking powder, sugar, bicarbonate of soda, salt, cinnamon and nutmeg into a bowl and mix well.
5. In a separate bowl, beat eggs, vanilla extract, honey, butter and milk. Add the bananas and stir.
6. Add egg mixture to dry mixture and stir roughly with a fork to make a thick, lumpy consistency.
7. Spoon mixture into muffin tin / paper muffin cases and cook for 20-25 mins until golden brown and firm to the touch.





CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

Storage: Home made biscuits don't keep as long as shop-bought ones but in an air tight container they will keep for a few days without going soft. If they do go soft, just crumble them on top of ice cream.

Makes 30

OAT & RAISIN COOKIES

How to produce (almost) instant freshly-baked cookies to impress unexpected guests.

Makes 30

TIP:

If you heat the blade of the knife in a jug of hot water it is easier to cut through the dough.

Ingredients	
● 150g salted butter, softened	1. Preheat the oven to 190°C / 375°F / Gas 5.
● 80g light brown muscovado sugar	Lightly grease and line two baking trays with non-stick baking paper.
● 80g granulated sugar	2. Beat the butter and sugars in a bowl until creamy. Add in the vanilla extract and egg and beat well. Sieve the flour, bicarbonate of soda and salt, add to the mixture and mix well. Stir in the chocolate chips.
● 2 tsp vanilla extract	3. Place small mounds of the mixture well apart on the baking trays. Bake in the oven for 10 mins until light brown on the edges.
● 1 large egg	4. Leave on the tray for a couple of minutes to cool and then transfer to a rack.
● 225g plain flour	
● ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda	
● ¼ tsp salt	
● 200g plain chocolate chips	

Ingredients	
● 200g pack butter, softened	4. Put half the mixture onto a piece of clingfilm and use the clingfilm and the work surface to shape the cookie dough into a smooth, firm sausage shape. Wrap tightly and freeze. Repeat with the other half of the dough. It can be frozen for up to 3 months.
● 200g soft brown sugar	5. If you want to cook some straight away, put heaped teaspoonfuls of mixture onto a lightly greased baking tray lined with baking parchment. (It's too sticky to cut into discs unfrozen!) Bake for 10 mins or until golden brown. Leave to cool before removing from tray
● 2 eggs	6. To cook from frozen, unwrap the frozen roll and cut off as many discs as you want, each about ½ cm wide. Replace the unused dough in the freezer.
● 1 tsp vanilla extract	7. Place discs on a lightly greased baking sheet, spacing them well to allow them to spread, and bake for 15 mins until pale golden brown. Leave to cool before removing from tray.
● 200g self-raising flour	
● 140g rolled porridge oats	
● 50g raisins	

- Heat oven to 180°C / 350°F / Gas 4
- Beat softened butter with sugar. Beat in the eggs, one at a time, followed by the vanilla extract and a pinch of salt. Stir in the flour and oats to make a stiff sticky mixture.
- Add the raisins and mix in.

It is easy to put together some tasty but simple wholesome snacks using your freezer and store cupboard. They also make great starters.

CROSTINI

A great way to use up stale baguette/ ciabatta bread. Prepare them in advance and keep in an air tight tin.

TIP: Add a sprinkle of dried or fresh herbs (eg basil, chives, rosemary) to give extra flavour before adding the oil.

INC PEN



1. Pre heat the oven to 150°C / 300°F / Gas 2

2. Cut a stale baguette or ciabatta into thin rounds (1/4 inch thick), spread them out on a baking sheet and sprinkle with a little olive oil.

3. Roast in the oven for 20-25 minutes to dry and crisp them.

Toppings:

- tinned tuna mixed with a little mayonnaise and a squeeze of lemon juice
- cream cheese topped with smoked salmon

Storage: Keep crostini in an airtight container for up to two weeks

GARLIC MUSHROOM TARTS

Makes 12 small or 4 larger tarts for a light lunch.

Storage: Keep in the fridge. They can be eaten cold but are nicer warm so reheat for 10 mins on 180°C/350°F/Gas 4

TIP: Vary the topping - use cherry tomatoes chopped in half and sprinkled with grated cheese, or thin slices of cooked sausage topped with sliced peppers. The possibilities are endless!

INC PEN



Ingredients

- 1 pack of frozen puff pastry, ready rolled.
- 150g of white or chestnut mushrooms
- 1 clove of garlic, or 2cm of garlic puree

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C / 400°F / Gas 6
2. Cut pastry sheet into 12 small squares and put on a lightly greased baking sheet.
3. Fry mushrooms in a little oil with finely chopped garlic until softened.
4. Put a teaspoonful of mushrooms onto centre of each pastry square and cook in the oven for 15-20 mins until golden brown.

COURGETTE FRITTERS

To reheat either warm on a baking sheet in a low oven or in a dry frying pan over a low heat.

Storage: This is a great way to extend the courgette season or use up a glut of home grown courgettes. Once made the fritters can be frozen and stored for up to 3 months.

INC PEN



Ingredients

- 150g self raising flour
- Pinch salt
- 150g courgettes - yellow or green or a mixture - grated
- 30g parmesan cheese, grated
- 1 egg
- 1 tbsp olive oil plus some for frying
- 140ml milk

1. Put flour and salt in a bowl and add the grated courgette and parmesan. Beat the egg into milk and 1 tbsp olive oil and add to flour in bowl, mix well.
2. Fry dessertspoonfuls of batter mixture on medium heat for 2 or 3 minutes, leaving room for them to spread. Turn over when the batter starts to bubble.
3. Serve warm with crispy bacon or chorizo or baked beans.

HOME MADE OVEN WEDGES

Storage: These are best eaten freshly cooked, but will keep in the fridge for a couple of days. Roasted vegetables make tasty soup, so you could use up any left-overs by liquidising them with stock made from a stock cube, or a tin of chopped tomatoes and water to thin.

TIP: Add a pinch of dried chilli flakes and a teaspoonful of ground cumin to the bowl with the olive oil to make them spicy.

 INCPEN



Ingredients

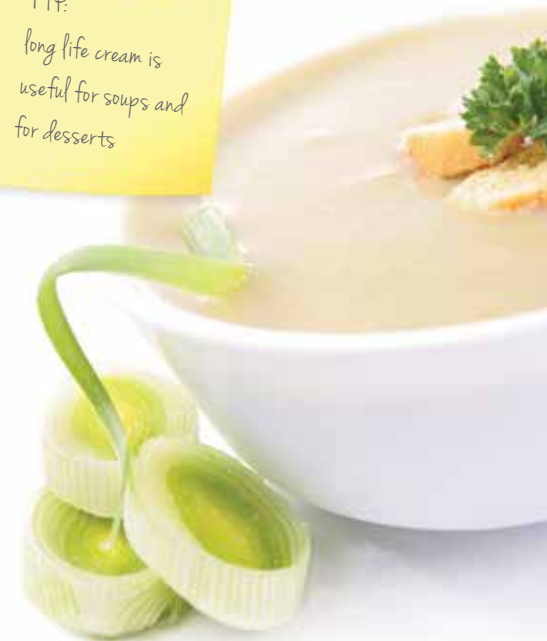
- whatever root vegetables you have – sweet potato, potato, carrot, parsnip, onions

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C/400°F/Gas 6
2. Scrub your vegetables (no need to peel them) and cut into even sized wedges (sweet potato cooks more quickly than ordinary potato so those pieces can be a bit thicker)
3. Put in bowl with tablespoonful of olive or vegetable oil and stir round to coat. Sprinkle with a little salt and pepper. Put on baking sheet and roast for 20-25 mins.



Making soup is quick and easy, and helps make small quantities of ingredients go a long way - plus you can use up vegetables that are less than perfect. The only equipment you need is a saucepan and a food processor, liquidiser or hand held blender. Keep portions of soup in the freezer for quick lunches and suppers.

TIP:
long life cream is
useful for soups and
for desserts



LEEK & POTATO SOUP

 INCPEN



Ingredients

- 2-3 leeks, sliced into rounds
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 225g potato, cubed
- 1.2 litres vegetable or chicken stock (made with stock cubes dissolved in hot water)
- 150ml single cream or creme fraiche
- Tablespoonful of vegetable or olive oil
- Salt and black pepper to season

1. Heat the oil in a large pan. Add the onions, potatoes and leeks and cook over medium heat for 3-4 minutes.
2. Add in the stock and bring to the boil. Simmer until the vegetables are softened – approx. 10 mins.
3. Use a hand blender in the saucepan, or tip into a blender and blitz until smooth. Taste and season.
4. Add the cream or creme fraiche, heat through gently and serve.





MINESTRONE SOUP

A wonderful warming one-pot supper – vary the ingredients according to what you have available.

 INCPEN



Ingredients

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 3 large carrots cut into quarters
- 1 large onion cut into quarters
- 4 celery sticks, roughly chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 2 tbsp tomato puree
- 2 litres vegetable stock (made from stock cubes dissolved in hot water)
- 400g can chopped tomatoes
- 400g can butter or cannellini beans, or chick peas
- 1 large potato chopped into cubes
- Half a shredded cabbage, or some shredded curly kale
- 140g spaghetti, snapped into short lengths

1. Using a food processor, blitz the carrots, onion and celery into small pieces. (If you only have a hand held mixer, you can chop the vegetables into small pieces by hand.)
2. Heat the oil gently in a pan, add the blitzed vegetables, potato and garlic. Turn up the heat and cook for 5 mins until softened.
3. Add in the tomato puree, stock and tomatoes and stir. Bring to the boil then simmer, covered, for 10 mins.
4. Add the beans and pasta, cook for another 7-8 mins. Add the shredded cabbage and cook for 3-4 minutes. Season to taste.

TIPS

-You could use garlic puree in a tube
-instead of spaghetti you could use pasta shapes for variety



SAUSAGE & TOMATO BAKE

An easy supper that can be varied depending on what you have in the cupboard. Use up stale bread and leftover cooked sausages or other cooked meat.

Tip: You could use pieces of cooked meat e.g. pork or gammon instead of the sausages if that's what you have leftover



 INCPEN



Ingredients

- 25g butter, softened
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 4 thick slices stale white or brown bread
- 12 cherry tomatoes
- 3 cooked sausages, sliced
- 500ml milk
- 3 eggs
- 50g cheddar, grated



1. Preheat oven to 180°C / 350°F / Gas 4. Grease a shallow baking dish or tin.
2. Mix the butter and garlic together, and use to butter the bread slices, then cut them in half diagonally.
3. Arrange the bread slices, overlapping, in the baking dish. Spread the cherry tomatoes, cut in half, and the sausage pieces around and between the slices of bread.
4. Whisk the milk and eggs together, and season with salt and pepper. Pour over the bread and press down to absorb the liquid. Leave to stand for 5 mins. Scatter the cheese over the top, then bake for 35-40 mins until golden and just set.



TUNA FISHCAKES

Serve the fishcakes with salad, or why not make an easy spicy tomato sauce for them.

Makes 4

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Ingredients	
● 200g can of tuna / salmon	1. Mix tuna, mashed potato, onion and tartare sauce
● 300g mashed potato (see tip below)	or mayonnaise thoroughly together in a bowl, and form into 4 round flat cakes with your hands.
● 2 tablespoonfuls of tartare sauce or plain mayonnaise	2. Put the flour onto a plate and coat the fish cakes, then put in fridge for 10 minutes to firm up.
● 2 spring onions finely chopped / or fried onion	3. Fry in a little oil for about 4 minutes each side, until brown.
● Salt and pepper to season	
● Flour to dust	

TIPS:

You could coat the fishcakes in breadcrumbs if you prefer. Follow instructions for stages 1 and 2 and then dip the fishcakes first in beaten egg and then in breadcrumbs before putting in fridge.

A quick way to make mashed potato is to cook a couple of large potatoes in the microwave in their skins. Before cooking wash the potatoes and prick them with a fork, this allows steam to escape and prevents them from exploding in the microwave. When they are cooked, scoop out the potato from the skin - you could also use instant mash or frozen mash for speed.

Make the fishcakes go further (and disguise some extra vegetables) by adding ingredients eg 60 grams of sweetcorn (frozen or tinned) or grated courgette.

Tartare sauce can be made by adding finely chopped capers to mayonnaise - add a small jar of capers to your shopping list so that you have them ready.

Did you know: It's easy to make your own breadcrumbs - you can either grate a couple of slices of stale bread and spread the breadcrumbs out on a baking sheet and toast them lightly for about 15 minutes in a medium oven 180°C/350°F/Gas 4 or dry the stale slices whole on a baking sheet and then crush them with a rolling pin. Breadcrumbs will keep for 3 months or more in an airtight container.

If you're short of time, just freeze all your odd pieces of stale bread and then make the breadcrumbs when you have spare time.

EASY SPICY TOMATO SAUCE

By making it yourself you can make this sauce as hot and spicy or mild as you prefer. It can be used as a tomato base on a pizza, a sauce for pasta and also makes a good dip for strips of pitta bread.

If you don't like handling garlic, buy a tube of garlic puree

<input type="checkbox"/>	Storage: Store the sauce in a clean sealed jar in the fridge
<input type="checkbox"/>	for 3-4 days, it is also good
<input type="checkbox"/>	to freeze in batches.
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Ingredients	
● 800 g can of chopped tomatoes	1. In a saucepan mix the tomatoes, olive oil, garlic, chilli,
● 2 tablespoonfuls of olive oil	sugar and salt and simmer gently for about 8 minutes.
● 2 cloves of garlic , finely chopped	Taste and add more seasoning if needed.
● small pinch of dried chilli flakes	2. If you have accidentally made it too spicy, add a
● 1/2 tsp salt	tablespoonful of cream or natural yoghurt to take the
● 1/4 tsp sugar	heat out of it, or just dilute it by adding another tin of
● Small knob of butter (about the size of a walnut)	tomatoes.

MEATBALLS

Turns leftover meat into a comforting tasty meal.

You can vary the ingredients by adding a carrot to the meat and onion when mincing, or by using different herbs and spices.



Ingredients

- 225g cooked lamb or beef
- 1 onion
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 2 tablespoons chopped parsley
- 1 clove of garlic, crushed
- salt & pepper
- 1 egg, beaten
- 40g dried breadcrumbs
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil

1. Roughly chop the meat and onion into 2 inch pieces, then mince finely either in a food processor or mincer. Put into a bowl with the cinnamon, chopped parsley, crushed garlic, salt and pepper and one beaten egg and mix thoroughly.
2. Form into 6 round balls with your hands and put into the fridge to firm for 30 minutes. Dip in beaten egg, let most of the egg drip off, then roll in the breadcrumbs and fry in the oil for a few minutes each side, until browned.



CITRUS CAKE

This big moist sponge is a good way to use up surplus root vegetables – if you live alone, freeze some squares to eat later.

Don't put icing on the cake if you are freezing it.



Ingredients

- 200g butter, melted
- 140g sultanas or raisins
- zest and juice of 2 oranges
- 300g self-raising flour
- 300g light soft brown sugar
- 2 tsp mixed spice
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 4 large eggs, beaten
- 300g carrots, parsnips, pumpkin, butternut squash or swede, or a mixture, grated
- 200g icing sugar or fondant icing sugar

1. Heat oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas 4. Grease and line a 30 x 20cm baking tin with baking parchment.
2. Mix the sultanas and zest and juice from 1 orange and microwave on High for 2 mins.
3. Put the flour, caster sugar, spices, bicarbonate of soda and pinch of salt into a large bowl.
4. Mix the eggs with the melted butter and sultana mixture, then add to the dry ingredients and stir well.
5. Stir in the grated vegetables and put the mixture into the lined baking tin. Bake for 35 - 40 mins, or until a skewer poked in the centre comes out clean. Cool in the tin.
6. Put the icing sugar in a bowl and add remaining orange zest plus enough juice to make a runny icing. Drizzle all over the cooled cake, leave to set, then cut into 15 squares.

Tip: Different vegetables have different moisture content and might need slightly less or slightly more cooking time. Test with a skewer.



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