

Together We Can

Healthy Recipes Made Easy

Italian

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A selection of popular household recipes for you to choose from and try at home whether cooking alone, with friends or family.

Save yourself time, money and calories by trying these.

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Cheese & Tomato Pizza

Ingredients

Tomato Sauce
1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
1 small onion, finely chopped
1 garlic clove, crushed
300ml (½ pint) passata (smooth sieved tomatoes) or 1 tin (400 g) chopped tomatoes
1 tbsp (15 ml) tomato puree
1 tsp (5 ml) dried basil
½ tsp (2.5 ml) sugar
Pinch of salt and freshly ground black pepper
125 g (4 oz) mozzarella, sliced (or grated Cheddar Cheese)

Method

1. Sauté the onion and garlic in the olive oil for 5 minutes until translucent.
2. Add the passata or chopped tomatoes, tomato puree, basil, sugar, salt and pepper. Continue to simmer for 5 – 10 minutes or until the sauce has thickened a little.
3. Spread the sauce on the pizza base. Scatter over the cheese and any additional toppings from the list below.

Bake at 200°C / 450°F / gas mark 8 for 15 – 20 minutes until the cheese is bubbling and golden brown.

Pizza Toppings

This is a great opportunity to add extra vegetables to your children's diet. Add any combination of the following:

Tomatoes, sliced

- Cherry tomatoes, halved
- Red, yellow and green peppers, sliced
- Mushrooms, sliced
- Sweetcorn
- Onion rings
- Olives
- Courgettes, sliced
- Tuna, flaked
- Spinach, cooked and drained
- Broccoli florets, cooked
- Colourful cheeses, e.g. Red Leicester, Double Gloucester
- Pineapple
- Peas
- Leeks, thinly sliced
- Baby sweetcorn
- Cooked turkey or chicken
- Spring onions
- Cooked aubergine
- Poached egg on top
- Salmon (smoked or tinned) and dill
- Basil
- Oregano

Alternative Pizza Bases

Ready-made pizza base

- English muffin, toasted and split horizontally
- Wholemeal or white pitta bread
- French bread, halved horizontally

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Tortilla Pizza

Preheat oven to Gas 4 180C

Ingredients

- Tortilla pizza
Tomato Puree/ Passata
- Grated courgette
Sliced mixed peppers
- Mushrooms
- Sweetcorn
Low fat grated cheese

Method

1. Spread the tomato puree onto one side of the tortilla.
2. Place all the other ingredients onto the tortilla, layering the cheese on last
3. Place another tortilla on top of the ingredients and place in preheated oven. For approximately 10 minutes.

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Turkey Meatballs with Fresh Tomato Sauce

Ingredients serves 4

1 lb minced turkey
4 oz cheddar cheese
1 egg
4 oz white breadcrumbs
2 teaspoons dried mixed herbs
2 tablespoons olive oil

Fresh tomato sauce

1 onion
4 lb tomatoes
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 teaspoon dried mixed herbs
2 carrots

Method

1. To make the tomato sauce, first peel and slice the onion finely
2. Chop the tomatoes
3. Heat the oil in a large pan, add the onion and cook until soft
4. Add the tomatoes and mixed herbs, cover with a lid and bring to the boil, stirring occasionally
5. Reduce the heat to low, partially cover the pan with a lid and cook gently for about 1 hour
6. Sieve the tomato sauce to get rid of any of the skins
7. Put the turkey into a bowl
8. Grate the cheese and beat the egg
9. Add the cheese, egg, breadcrumbs and mixed herbs to the chicken and mix well
10. Shape the mixture into about 16 balls and chill for 30 minutes in the fridge
11. Heat the oil in a shallow pan and fry the balls in batches until brown on all sides (if doing a large number, brown in oven in a greased tin at 180°C/350°F/gas 4)
12. Add the meatballs to the sauce and simmer without a lid for 20 minutes
13. Serve with wholegrain spaghetti

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Lasagne

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp (15ml) olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 celery stick, chopped
- 1 red pepper, chopped
- 225g (8oz) lean beef mince (or turkey mince)
- 1 tin (400g) chopped tomatoes
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) tomato puree
- 1tsp (5ml) dried basil or oregano
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
- 8 sheets lasagne (the no pre-cook variety)
- 85g (3oz) mozzarella cheese

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas mark 4.
2. Heat the olive oil in a large non-stick frying pan. Cook the onion, celery, pepper and mince, stirring frequently, for 5-6 minutes until the mince is browned. Drain off any fat.
3. Add the tomatoes, tomato puree and herbs. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
4. Place a layer of lasagne sheets at the bottom of an oiled baking dish. Spoon over one third of the mince mixture. Repeat the layers, finishing with a layer of the mince mixture.
5. Cover with very thin slices of mozzarella. Bake for 30 minutes until the cheese is bubbling and golden.

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Chicken in tomato sauce

Ingredients

- 4 chicken portions, on the bone
- 2 tbsp (30ml) olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 tin (400g) chopped tomatoes
- 1 red and 1 green pepper, chopped
- 1tbsp (15ml) each of fresh basil, fresh parsley and fresh chives (alternatively, use 1 tbsp/15ml dried mixed herbs)

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 160°C/325°F/gas mark 3.
2. Sauté the chicken portions in 1 tablespoon of the olive oil until browned. Remove with a slotted spoon and put in a casserole dish.
3. Heat the remaining oil. Add the onion and garlic and cook for 3 minutes.
4. Add the peppers and cook for a further 2 minutes.
5. Add the tinned tomatoes and herbs and simmer for 5 minutes.
6. Spoon sauce over the chicken and cook in the oven for about 45 minutes

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Vegetable Lasagne

Ingredients serves 4 (499 cals per serving, 19g fat per serving, 62.3% of daily target for 5 a day)

8 oz	Precooked lasagne
1 tablespoon	olive oil
6 oz	onions
6 oz	carrots
3 sticks	celery
6 oz	courgettes
½ teaspoon	mixed dried herbs
1 x 400g can	chopped tomatoes
115g (4oz)	tomato puree

Cheese sauce

4 oz	cheddar cheese
1 oz	butter or margarine
1oz	plain flour
1 pint	warm milk
½ teaspoon	wholegrain mustard

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C/400°F/Gas 6. Grease a deep lasagne dish, approximately 30cm (12in) square, with a little of the oil.
2. Peel and dice the onions. Wash the carrots and celery and then dice. Trim the courgettes, and slice thinly. Grate the cheese for the sauce.
3. Sauté the onions, carrots, celery and courgettes in the remaining olive oil for a few minutes, then add the herbs, tomatoes, tomato puree and water. Bubble for 10-15 minutes.
4. Make the cheese sauce by melting the butter or margarine then adding the flour. Cook until the texture and colour are sandy, then add the milk, stirring continuously until thickened and smooth. Add the cheese and mustard, and cook for a further 2-3 minutes.
5. Arrange half of the lasagne on the base of the dish. Pour half the vegetables over the lasagne, then top with another layer of lasagne. Top with the remaining vegetables, then pour over the cheese sauce. Bake in the preheated oven until golden brown and the lasagne is soft, about 30-35 minutes.

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Mediterranean Fish Casserole

Try this light and low-fat main dish that's nutritious and filling – it's easy to prepare and ready to serve in less than half an hour.

Cooking: 15 mins

Preparation: 10 mins

Serves 4

Calories: 200kcal

Fat Content: 6g

Ingredients

- 15ml (1tbsp) olive oil
- 45ml (3tbsp) fish stock or water
- 1 large onion, thinly sliced
- 3 sticks celery, sliced
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 400g can chopped plum tomatoes
- 60ml (4tbsp) dry white wine or fish stock
- 600g (1lb 5oz) white fish fillet, such as cod, cut into chunks
- 12 black olives
- 60ml (4tbsp) fresh chopped parsley

Method

4. Heat the oil and stock in a large, wide pan or flameproof casserole. Add the onion and allow to simmer on a medium heat, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes to soften but not brown.
5. Add the celery and garlic, and cook for a further 2 – 3 minutes. Stir occasionally.
6. Stir in the tomatoes and wine or stock, then bring to the boil. Reduce the heat to a simmer, add the fish and olives. Cover and simmer for 6 – 8 minutes or until the fish is white and flakes easily.
7. Serve the casserole hot, sprinkled with parsley. New potatoes in their skins or baked potatoes make a good accompaniment.

Variation: Most fish can be used for this dish, but you may need to adjust the cooking time depending on the thickness of the fish. You could add about 100g (3½ oz) of peeled, cooked prawns towards the end of step 3 for a special occasion.

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Pasta, Peas and Bacon

Ingredients (makes 4 servings)

250g (9oz)	onions
175g (6oz)	cheddar cheese
85g (3oz)	margarine
225g (8oz)	lean diced bacon
175g (6oz)	frozen peas
225g (8oz)	pasta shapes
	olive oil
40ml (1½fl oz)	milk

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas 4.
2. Peel and chop the onions, and grate the cheese.
Melt the margarine in a saucepan, add the onion and fry until soft.
Add the diced bacon, and continue to fry gently until the bacon is thoroughly cooked.
Add the peas and continue cooking slowly over a low heat for about 5-6 minutes.
3. In a separate saucepan, cook the pasta in boiling water. When al dente, drain, rinse and sprinkle with a little olive oil to prevent sticking.
4. When the bacon mixture is cooked, add the pasta, milk and half or all the cheese, and stir gently to combine until the cheese has melted. You can serve this straightaway, or put into an ovenproof dish, sprinkle with the remaining cheese, and put into the preheated oven for approximately 10 – 15 minutes, or until bubbling.

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PESTO PASTA WITH HALLOUMI

SERVES 2

Ingredients

- 40Z PASTA SHAPES
- LOW FAT COOKING SPRAY
- 40Z HALLOUMI CHEESE, SLICED INTO RECTANGULAR FINGERS
- 1 BUNCH SPRING ONIONS CHOPPED
- 1 LARGE RED PEPPER, DE-SEEDED AND SLICED
- 60Z MANGETOUT
- 2 TABLESPOONS OF RED OR GREEN PESTO
- FRESH GROUND BLACK PEPPER TO TASTE

Method

1. Cook the pasta in a large pan of boiling water, 10-12 minutes. When you drain the pasta reserve 4 tablespoons of the cooking liquid.
2. Put a large non-stick frying pan onto a medium heat and spray with low fat cooking spray. Brown the halloumi cheese by gently frying it for 1-2 minutes on each side. Remove from the frying pan and keep to one side on a warm plate.
3. Spray the frying pan again, add the spring onions and pepper and stir fry for a couple of minutes. Add the mange tout and continue to cook for 3-5 minutes or until they are cooked to your taste.
4. Add the reserved pasta cooking liquid to the frying pan and stir in the pesto.
5. Add the cooked pasta, mix thoroughly and season to taste.
6. Serve on warm plates and top with the halloumi cheese.

Top Tip

Halloumi cheese doesn't melt which makes it ideal for kebabs and stir-fries.

The fresher it is, the better it stay together in the pan, so always look for the cheese with the longest date.

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Ratatouille Pasta

Ingredients (serves 4)

225g (8oz) macaroni, penne or twists

For the ratatouille:

1 tsp or a spray of olive oil

1 garlic clove, peeled and crushed

350g (12oz) red or white onions, peeled and roughly diced

1 red and 1 green pepper, deseeded and roughly diced

225g (8oz) courgettes, trimmed and roughly diced

1 aubergine, trimmed and roughly diced

2 x 400g cans good Italian tomatoes

1 tablespoon tomato puree

1 teaspoon mixed dried herbs

150ml (5fl oz) water

Method

1. Heat 1 teaspoon of the olive oil in a non-stick saucepan and gently fry the garlic and onion for about 5 minutes. Add the peppers, courgette and aubergine, and continue to cook over a moderate heat for 5 minutes.
2. Add the canned tomatoes, tomato puree and herbs. Pour in the water, reduce the heat and simmer, stirring, for another 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a large saucepan of boiling water, cook the pasta for 10 minutes or until tender. Drain, then mix with the vegetables. Warm through and serve.

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GARLIC BREAD

Ingredients

2 Garlic Cloves
½ tsp mixed herbs
2oz Low fat spread
Small French Stick

Method

1. Crush garlic cloves
2. Cream together with low fat spread and mixed herbs in a small bowl
3. Slice French stick
4. Spread with garlic butter
5. Bake for approx 6-8 minutes in a hot oven.

Handy Hint

Garlic spread can be made up and stored in the fridge ready to use

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