

The background of the cover is a close-up photograph of fresh ingredients on a wooden cutting board. On the left, a glass bottle of golden olive oil is partially visible. In the center, there is a pile of finely chopped green herbs, likely basil. To the right, there are several whole and sliced garlic cloves, a whole purple shallot, and a few ripe red and yellow tomatoes. A sharp knife with a wooden handle lies diagonally across the board. The overall scene is brightly lit, suggesting a fresh and healthy kitchen environment.

The Mediterranean Diet
Recipe Book
Seventh Edition

By Ray Darken

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Breakfast & Light Lunches

ARTICHOKE-PARMESAN PHYLLO BITES

Makes 30

3 (6 ounce) jars marinated artichoke hearts, undrained
3/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese, divided
1 clove garlic, minced
10 sheets frozen phyllo pastry, thawed

- Step 1.** Drain artichoke hearts, reserving marinade; set marinade aside.
- Step 2.** Position knife blade in food processor bowl; add artichoke hearts, 1/2 cup cheese and garlic. Pulse 4 times or until artichoke hearts are finely chopped. Set aside.
- Step 3.** Place 1 phyllo sheet on wax paper (keep remaining phyllo covered). Lightly brush phyllo sheet with oil portion of reserved marinade; sprinkle with 2 teaspoons of remaining cheese. Top with another phyllo sheet; brush lightly with oil portion of reserved marinade. Cut phyllo sheet in half lengthwise. Cut each half crosswise into thirds, making 6 sections, each measuring approximately 6 x 5 inches. Place a heaping teaspoon of artichoke mixture in center of each phyllo section. Gather corners of phyllo over filling, and gently twist to close. Place on a lightly greased baking sheet. Repeat procedure with remaining phyllo sheets, marinade, cheese and artichoke mixture. Bake at 350 degrees F for 14 minutes or until golden. Serve immediately.



CHICKEN WITH RAISINS AND LEMON

Serves 4

1 3 1/2-pound chicken, cut into 8 pieces
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 large russet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1 1/2 inch chunks
2 teaspoons minced garlic
1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric
1 large lemon, peel and white pith cut away, very thinly sliced
1/2 cup raisins
1/2 cup canned low-salt chicken broth
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice



Arrange chicken in single layer in large Dutch oven. Drizzle oil over. Tuck potatoes between chicken pieces. Sprinkle with garlic and turmeric. Season with salt and pepper. Lay lemon slices over. Sprinkle with raisins. Pour over enough broth barely to cover chicken. Bring to boil over high heat. Cover and boil 10 minutes. Uncover; reduce heat to medium and simmer until chicken is just cooked through and potatoes are tender, about 30 minutes. Transfer chicken and potatoes to platter. Tent with foil to keep warm. Add lemon juice to Dutch oven. Boil cooking liquid until thickened to light sauce consistency and reduced by half, about 7 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Spoon over chicken and serve.

COUSCOUS SALAD WITH SHRIMP AND MINT

Serves 4

1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
1 large garlic clove, minced
1 teaspoon celery seed
2 cups couscous (about 10 ounces)
2 1/4 cups boiling water
1 pound peeled cooked shrimp

1 1/2 cups chopped seeded tomatoes
1 cup diced celery
1/2 cup chopped green onions
1/3 cup chopped fresh mint
3 tablespoons drained capers

Whisk first 4 ingredients in small bowl. Season dressing with salt and pepper. Place couscous in large bowl. Pour water over. Cover and let stand until water is absorbed, about 10 minutes. Fluff with fork. Add shrimp, tomatoes, celery, green onions, mint and capers. Mix in dressing. Chill until cold, about 30 minutes or up to 2 hours.



INSALATA CAPRESE

Serves 4 to 6

2 pounds vine-ripened tomatoes (about 4 large), sliced 1/4 inch thick

1 pound fresh mozzarella, sliced 1/4 inch thick

1/4 cup packed fresh basil or arugula leaves, washed well and spun dry

1/4 teaspoon dried oregano, crumbled, if using arugula instead of basil

3 to 4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

fine sea salt to taste

freshly ground black pepper to taste

On a large platter arrange tomato and mozzarella slices and basil leaves, alternating and overlapping them. Sprinkle salad with oregano and arugula and drizzle with oil. Season salad with salt and pepper.



Serves 4

2 1-pound loaves frozen white bread dough, thawed, room temperature
9 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
2 medium onions, chopped
5 large garlic cloves, minced
2 large red bell peppers, chopped
1 large bunch green Swiss chard, ribs removed and thinly sliced, leaves thinly sliced



- Step 1.** Place each loaf of bread dough in separate bowl. Add 1 tablespoon oil to each; season each with 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Knead each in bowl until oil is well incorporated, about 3 minutes. Let dough rest in bowls 10 minutes.
- Step 2.** Oil two 15x10-inch baking sheets. Turn out dough onto floured surface; knead 1 minute. Roll out each dough piece to irregular 13x9-inch rectangle, pulling and stretching dough. Transfer each to prepared sheet. Brush each with 1 tablespoon oil. Let dough rise uncovered in warm draft-free area until puffy, about 30 minutes.
- Step 3.** Meanwhile, preheat oven to 400°F. Heat 3 tablespoons oil in heavy large skillet over medium heat. Add onions and garlic; sauté 1 minute. Add bell peppers and chard ribs and sauté until tender, about 10 minutes. Add chard leaves and stir until just wilted and coated with oil, about 3 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.
- Step 4.** Press dough all over with fingers, forming indentations. Brush each with 1 tablespoon of oil. Spread vegetables over, leaving 1-inch border. Bake until crusts are golden, about 25 minutes. Serve at room temperature.

MUSSELS WITH SHALLOTS AND THYME

Serves 6

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
6 shallots, finely chopped
8 fresh thyme sprigs
2 bay leaves
1 cup dry white wine
1 cup bottled clam juice
1/4 cup whipping cream
2 pounds mussels, scrubbed, debearded

Heat oil in large skillet over medium heat. Add shallots; sauté until softened, about 10 minutes. Add thyme, bay leaves, wine, clam juice and cream; bring to boil. Reduce heat; simmer until mixture is reduced to 1 cup, about 10 minutes. Add mussels, cover and simmer until mussels open, about 7 minutes; discard any mussels that do not open. Using tongs, divide mussels among bowls. Season broth with salt and pepper. Ladle broth over mussels.



SICILIAN FISH STEW WITH TOMATO AND PARSLEY

Serves 4

6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 cup chopped onion
2 large garlic cloves, chopped
2/3 cup chopped fresh parsley
1 cup chopped tomato (about 1 medium)
1 1/3 cups cold water
2/3 cup dry white wine
2 pounds mixed fish fillets, cut into 2-inch pieces

Heat extra-virgin olive oil in heavy large pot or Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add chopped onion and garlic and sauté 4 minutes. Add parsley and stir 2 minutes. Add tomato and cook 2 minutes longer. Add 1 1/3 cups cold water and dry white wine and simmer until fish is cooked through, about 10 minutes. Season stew to taste with salt and pepper. Ladle into bowls and serve.



TUNA SALAD ON OLIVE BREAD WITH ARUGULA

Serves 6

2 6-ounce packages albacore tuna packed in water, drained

3/4 cup mayonnaise

1/2 cup chopped green onions

1/4 cup diced seeded English hothouse cucumber

1/4 cup minced fresh dill

1/4 cup drained capers

2 tablespoons Dijon mustard

2 tablespoons minced fresh tarragon

12 1/3-inch-thick slices olive bread

1 cup arugula



Mix tuna, 1/4 cup mayonnaise, and next 6 ingredients in medium bowl to blend. Season with salt and pepper. Divide tuna salad among 6 bread slices; top with arugula leaves. Spread remaining mayonnaise on remaining 6 bread slices; place atop arugula. Cut sandwiches in half; wrap each tightly in plastic wrap. ***(Can be made 1 day ahead. Refrigerate.)***

TURKISH ZUCCHINI PANCAKES

Makes 20

1 pound zucchini, trimmed, coarsely grated
2 cups chopped green onions
4 eggs, beaten to blend
1/2 cup all purpose flour
1/3 cup chopped fresh dill or 1 1/2 tablespoons dried dillweed
1/3 cup chopped fresh parsley
2 tablespoons chopped fresh tarragon or 2 teaspoons dried
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon ground pepper
1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese (about 3 ounces)
2/3 cup chopped walnuts (about 3 ounces)
Extra-virgin olive oil



- Step 1.** Place zucchini in colander. Sprinkle zucchini with salt and let stand 30 minutes to drain. Squeeze zucchini between hands to remove liquid, then squeeze dry in several layers of paper towels.
- Step 2.** Combine zucchini, chopped green onions, 4 eggs, flour, chopped dill, parsley, tarragon, 1/2 teaspoon salt and pepper in medium bowl. Mix well. Fold in crumbled feta cheese. (Zucchini mixture can be prepared 3 hours ahead. Cover tightly and refrigerate. Stir to blend before continuing.) Fold chopped walnuts into zucchini mixture.
- Step 3.** Preheat oven to 300°F. Place baking sheet in oven. Cover bottom of large nonstick skillet with olive oil. Heat skillet over medium-high heat. Working in batches, drop zucchini mixture into skillet by heaping tablespoonfuls. Fry until pancakes are golden brown and cooked through, about 3 minutes per side. Transfer each batch of pancakes to baking sheet in oven to keep warm. Serve pancakes hot.



Salads

CRAB, AVOCADO AND COCONUT SALAD

Serves 6

6cm piece ginger	2 green onions, sliced thinly
1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil	1 red chilli, sliced thinly
1 cooked mud crab, meat picked, or 400g crab meat	1 teaspoon fish sauce
1 avocado, diced	Salt and pepper
1 Lebanese cucumber, seeded, peeled, finely diced	30g fresh coconut, grated coarsely
1 lime, half segmented and broken into small pieces, remainder juiced	Coriander sprigs, to garnish

Step 1. Slice ginger very thinly. Stack slices together on chopping board and slice again to create thin matchsticks or julienne; place in small saucepan with oil and heat gently for about 5 minutes to infuse the ginger's flavour into the oil; stand to cool to room temperature.

Step 2. If using a whole cooked crab, then you need to carefully pick all the meat out of the carcass. Remove top shell and cut body in half. Carefully twist claws off body and gently pull meat out of body cavity as you pull claw away. Crack claws with back of a heavy bladed knife and pull away the shell. Place meat into a small bowl, taking care to remove any small shards of shell. This can be a painstaking process, but is worth it for the superior flavour of freshly cooked crab.

Step 3. Combine avocado, cucumber, lime flesh and juice, green onion, chilli, fish sauce, a little salt and pepper and a tablespoon of the cooled, drained ginger oil, in a medium bowl. Using a metal spoon, gently fold all the ingredients together, being careful not to break up the avocado too much.

Step 4. Spoon salad onto a serving plate and drizzle with some extra ginger oil; garnish with coriander.



FIRECRACKER SPINACH SALAD WITH ORANGE SESAME DRESSING

Serves 4

For the Orange Sesame Dressing:

1 cup orange juice
1 teaspoon honey
2 teaspoons sesame oil
1 tablespoon soy sauce
2 tablespoons rice wine vinegar
1/4 cup water
1 teaspoon hot red pepper sauce (optional)
1 shallot, chopped
2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger

For the Orange Sesame Dressing:

Cook the orange juice in a saucepan until reduced by half. Combine with the honey, sesame oil, soy sauce, vinegar, water and hot sauce in a blender. Add the shallot and ginger and process until smooth. Store in the refrigerator.

For the Salad:

Mix the spinach, daikon sprouts, carrot and jicama in large bowl. Add the dressing and toss to coat well. Garnish with the sesame seeds.

For the Salad:

6 cups washed baby spinach
1/4 cup daikon sprouts
1/4 cup julienned carrot
1/4 cup julienned jicama
2 tablespoons mixture of black sesame seeds and White sesame seeds, for garnish



ITALIAN SAUSAGE, POTATO AND ARUGULA SALAD

Serves 4

1/3 cup thinly sliced red onion

1 lb small (1 1/2- to 2-inch) boiling potatoes

1 lb sweet or hot Italian sausage links

4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

2 tablespoons red-wine vinegar

1 1/4 teaspoons salt

1/2 cup drained bottled roasted red peppers, cut into 1/4-inch strips

1/2 lb arugula, coarse stems discarded (4 cups)



Step 1. Soak onion in cold water to cover 15 minutes. Drain and pat dry.

Step 2. Meanwhile, cover potatoes with salted cold water by 2 inches in a 3-quart heavy saucepan and simmer, uncovered, until just tender, 15 to 25 minutes. Drain in a colander and cool slightly.

Step 3. While potatoes are simmering, prick sausages once or twice with a fork, then cook in 1 tablespoon oil in a large heavy skillet over moderate heat, turning occasionally, until browned and cooked through, about 10 minutes. Transfer to paper towels to drain. When sausages are cool enough to handle, cut diagonally into 1/2-inch pieces.

Step 4. Whisk together vinegar and salt in a large bowl until salt is dissolved. When potatoes are just cool enough to handle (but still warm), peel and cut into 1-inch cubes, adding to vinegar as cut, and toss gently.

Step 5. Add onion, sausages, roasted peppers, arugula, remaining 3 tablespoons oil, and salt and pepper to taste to potatoes and toss well.

MEDITERRANEAN CHOP SALAD

Serves 8

3 ribs celery, sliced
1 cup chopped roasted red or yellow pepper
1 large seedless cucumber, peeled and chopped
1/2 cup chopped pitted ripe olives
1/2 cup prepared balsamic vinaigrette salad dressing
1 (12 ounce) package hearts of romaine, rinsed and chopped
1 (6 ounce) box Pepperidge Farm® Seasoned Croutons or any variety
Freshly ground black pepper
Parmesan cheese shavings



- Step 1.** Mix celery, peppers, cucumber, olives and dressing in large serving bowl. Cover and refrigerate until serving time.
- Step 2.** Toss chopped lettuce, croutons and dressing mixture just before serving. Sprinkle with black pepper and Parmesan cheese.

MEDITERRANEAN GRILLED TUNA STEAKS AND SICILIAN-STYLE POTATO SALAD

Serves 4

2 pounds small red potatoes, sliced 1/2 inch thick
Salt
1/2 cup sun-dried tomatoes in oil, drained
1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling
4 6-ounce tuna steaks
2 tablespoons finely chopped rosemary
Juice of 1 lemon, plus 2 teaspoons grated peel
Pepper

2 teaspoons anchovy paste
1 clove garlic, finely chopped
1/2 red onion, chopped
3 ribs celery, finely chopped
1/2 cup large green olives, pitted and chopped
3 tablespoons capers
1/2 cup flat-leaf parsley, chopped



- Step 1.** In a large saucepan, add the potatoes and cold water to cover. Bring to a boil, add salt and cook the potatoes until just tender, 12 to 15 minutes. Drain and return to the saucepan.
- Step 2.** Meanwhile, in a small bowl, ladle potato cooking water over the sun-dried tomatoes. Let soak for 10 minutes; drain and thinly slice.
- Step 3.** Preheat a grill or grill pan to medium-high. Drizzle extra-virgin olive oil over the tuna, sprinkle with the rosemary and lemon peel and season with salt and pepper. In a large bowl, whisk together the 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil, lemon juice, anchovy paste and garlic. Toss with the potatoes, sun-dried tomatoes, red onion, celery, olives, capers and parsley.
- Step 4.** Grill the tuna for 3 minutes on each side for medium-rare. Serve with the potato salad.

MOROCCAN SEAFOOD AND BROCCOLI SALAD

Serves 6

4 cups broccoli florets
6 slender scallions, thinly sliced (white and green parts)
1 medium red bell peppers or yellow bell peppers, diced
1/4 cup currants or raisins
3/4 lb small shrimp or bay scallops, cooked
3 cups chicken broth or chicken bouillon
1 1/2 cups couscous
1/4 cup chopped flat leaf parsley
1 teaspoon dried thyme or fresh thyme
1/4 cup chopped nuts

For the Dressing:

2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1 teaspoon mild curry powder
1/4 teaspoon hot curry powder
1/2 teaspoon fresh ground pepper
1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes (or to taste)
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

- Step 1.** Steam broccoli 5 minutes, drain and refresh under cold running water; place in large bowl.
- Step 2.** Add scallions through seafood.
- Step 3.** Bring the chicken broth to a boil in a medium saucepan. Add the couscous, parsley and thyme, and cook 30 seconds; remove pan from heat, cover tightly and let stand 5 minutes.
- Step 4.** Make dressing: Whisk the seasonings into the lemon juice; gradually mix oil into the lemon juice until emulsified.
- Step 5.** Add the couscous, while still hot, to the vegetable mixture; add the dressing and toss to combine well.
- Step 6.** Chill at least 1 hour.
- Step 7.** Sprinkle with chopped pecans, pine nuts or other nuts of your choice before serving.



SALAD TORTILLAS

Serves 4

4 flour tortillas*
1 cup (200g) hummus**
100g baby spinach leaves
1 carrot, grated
1/2 red capsicum, seeded, cut into thin strips
2 tomatoes, diced
1/3 cup (65g) low-fat ricotta
2 stalks celery, cut into 10cm lengths
Sultanas (optional)

** Tortillas are available at most supermarkets and make a welcome change from regular sliced bread.*

*** For a flavor variation, try substituting low-fat cottage cheese for hummus.*



- Step 1.** Lay tortillas on a flat surface. Spread over hummus and top with spinach, carrot, capsicum and tomato. Roll up as tightly as possible. Wrap in foil or plastic wrap and pack into lunch box.
- Step 2.** Spread a little ricotta down centre of each piece of celery. Top with sultanas, if desired. Pack tortillas, celery sticks and a piece of fruit into lunch boxes.

SPANISH-STYLE ROASTED RED PEPPER SALAD WITH GRILLED TUNA

Serves 4

5 red bell peppers, roasted, peeled, and seeded; juices reserved
1 lbs fresh tuna
2/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
Cayenne
3 medium Yukon Gold potatoes (6 to 8 oz. each)
3 or 4 large eggs

6 cloves garlic, thinly sliced lengthwise
1/3 cup fresh lemon juice
36 kalamata olives, pitted
2 ribs celery, sliced
1 bunch arugula (about 6 oz.) or fresh spinach
4 scallions, thinly sliced on the bias

- Step 1.** Slice the peppers into thick strips and reserve them in a bowl with any juices. Light a charcoal or gas grill or heat a cast-iron skillet to high. Lightly coat the fresh tuna on all sides with a little of the extra-virgin olive oil, season with salt, pepper, and very little cayenne, and grill it over a hot flame to a medium doneness. Set aside.
- Step 2.** Peel the potatoes, cut them into quarters, and put them in a medium pot with cold water to cover. Add 1 tablespoon salt and bring to a boil over high heat. As soon as the potatoes come to a boil, reduce the heat and simmer until they're just tender, 10 to 12 min. Drain, run under cold water, and cut each quarter in half. Reserve.
- Step 3.** Put the eggs in a small pot, cover with cold water, and bring to a boil over high heat. Once boiling, reduce the heat to a hard simmer and cook for 8 min. Remove from the heat, drain, and chill in ice water. Once cooled, peel the eggs and reserve.
- Step 4.** In a sauté pan, heat the rest of the oil with the garlic over low heat until the garlic is golden, 10 to 12 min. Let cool for 10 min., strain out the garlic, and reserve the oil and garlic separately.
- Step 5.** Stir the lemon juice into the garlic-flavored oil and add 12 teaspoons salt, pepper, and a pinch of cayenne; set aside.
- Step 6.** Slice the tuna into bite-size pieces and put in a bowl. Add the potatoes, olives, and celery and mix gently. Add 3 to 4 tablespoons of the garlic dressing and toss. Season with salt, pepper, and a pinch of cayenne. Toss 3 tablespoons of the dressing with the pepper slices, and another 3 to 4 tablespoons of the dressing with the arugula. Reserve any extra dressing to drizzle on the completed salad, if you like.
- Step 7.** To serve the salad, arrange the greens on a shallow platter, mound the tuna-potato mixture in the middle, and arrange the roasted red pepper slices around that. Cut the hard-boiled eggs into wedges and arrange them around the perimeter. Sprinkle the garlic slivers and the sliced scallions over all.

SPINACH SALAD WITH MOROCCAN LEMON

Serves 4

2 lbs Spinach
1 1/2 cup finely chopped parsley
1 cup coarsely chopped cilantro
1 cup chopped celery leaves
3 garlic cloves, minced/pressed
1/2 teaspoon Paprika
1/4 teaspoon Chili powder
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
2 Moroccan lemon quarters, finely chopped
2 tablespoon lemon juice
6 cherry tomatoes, stemmed, half



Trim off spinach roots and remove bruised and yellowed leaves; discard. Rinse spinach well, drain, and coarsely chop. In a 5-6 quart pan, combine spinach, parsley, cilantro, and celery leaves. Stir over high heat just until greens are wilted, 3-5 minutes. Pour vegetables into a colander set over a bowl. Press spinach mixture to remove liquid; place vegetables in a serving bowl. (If made ahead, cover and chill up to a day.) Return drained spinach liquid to pan; add garlic, paprika, and chili powder. Boil, uncovered, over high heat until reduced to about 1/4 cup, 3-5 minutes. Add oil, preserved lemon, and lemon juice. (If made ahead, cover and chill up to a day.) Top greens with tomatoes and pour dressing over the vegetables.

TOMATO, BASIL AND COUSCOUS SALAD

Serves 6

2 1/4 cups canned chicken broth

1 10-ounce box couscous

1 cup chopped green onions

1 cup (generous) diced seeded plum tomatoes

1/3 cup thinly sliced fresh basil

1/2 cup olive oil

1/4 cup balsamic vinegar

1/4 teaspoon dried crushed red pepper

Cherry tomatoes, halved



Step 1. Bring broth to boil in medium saucepan. Add couscous. Remove from heat. Cover; let stand 5 minutes. Transfer to large bowl. Fluff with fork. Cool.

Step 2. Mix all ingredients except cherry tomatoes into couscous. Season with salt and pepper. (*Can be made 1 day ahead. Chill.*) Garnish with cherry tomatoes.



Soups & Vegetarian

CHESTNUT AND SAGE SOUP

Serves 6

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 leeks, sliced
1 small carrot, finely chopped
3 sage leaves, chopped
200 g vacuum packed chestnuts, or other ready-cooked chestnuts, chopped
1 x 400g can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
3 tablespoons sherry
1.5 liters meat, vegetable or chicken stock
Salt, and pepper

To garnish:

180g fromage frais, or low-fat Greek yoghurt
oil, for shallow-frying
6 sage leaves
6-12 chives



- Step 1.** Heat the oil in a large saucepan or pot. Add the leeks, carrot and sage and cook, stirring, for about 5 minutes until the vegetables are softened.
- Step 2.** Add the chestnuts, chickpeas, sherry and stock and bring to a boil. Simmer for 30 minutes until all the ingredients are very tender and well-combined.
- Step 3.** Remove the soup from the heat and allow it to cool briefly before puréeing the mixture. Then return to a low heat to keep hot and adjust the seasoning to taste with salt and pepper.
- Step 4.** To prepare the garnish, place some oil for shallow frying in a frying pan and, when it is very hot, add the extra whole sage leaves, spacing them well apart in the pan. Allow them to crisp up, turning gently if necessary. Place them on paper towel to drain.
- Step 5.** Ladle the soup into serving bowls and place 2 tablespoon fromage frais or yoghurt in the centre of each. Top with the crisp sage leaves and chive stems, snipped on the diagonal at each end to look neat. Sprinkle some freshly ground pepper and salt on top and serve.

CHICKEN, AUBERGINE AND TOMATO STEW

Serves 4

1.5kg chicken, jointed into 8 pieces
8 tablespoons and 1 teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil
350g aubergines
225 g red peppers
4 cloves garlic
1 x 400g canned chopped tomatoes
11 tablespoons and 2 teaspoons white wine
1 tablespoon oregano, chopped
1 tablespoon mint, chopped
1 tablespoon parsley, chopped
Black pepper



- Step 1.** Preheat the oven to 180C/gas 4.
- Step 2.** Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a large saucepan. Cook the chicken for 5 minutes or so, until golden. Season and remove from the pan.
- Step 3.** Heat the rest of the oil and cook the aubergine until golden. Add the peppers and garlic and fry for 2 minutes.
- Step 4.** Stir in the tomatoes and wine.
- Step 5.** Return the chicken to the pan and check the seasoning. Cover and transfer to the oven. Cook for 1 hour. Remove the lid and cook for a further 15 minutes or so, until the liquor has thickened.
- Step 6.** Stir in the herbs, cook for a further 5 minutes and serve.

CIOPPINO SEAFOOD DELIGHT

Serves 14

3/4 cup butter	1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
2 pieces chopped onions	1 cup water
2 cloves minced garlic	1 1/2 cups white wine
1 bunch chopped fresh parsley	1 1/2 pounds peeled and deveined large shrimps
2 (14.5 oz) cans stewed tomatoes	1 1/2 pounds bay scallops
2 (14.5 oz) cans chicken broth	18 pieces small clams
2 pieces bay leaves	18 pieces mussels (cleaned and debearded)
1 tablespoon dried basil	1 1/2 cups crabmeat
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme	1 1/2 pounds cubed cod fillets



- Step 1.** In a large stockpot, melt butter over medium low heat. After melting, add onions, parsley and garlic. Stir occasionally and slowly until the onions become tender and soft.
- Step 2.** Add the stewed tomatoes to the stockpot. While adding the tomatoes, break them into chunks. Pour the chicken broth then add the bay leaves, thyme, basil, oregano, wine and water. Mix thoroughly then cover the stockpot. Simmer for about 30 minutes.
- Step 3.** Add all the seafood ingredients (shrimps, scallops, mussels, and crabmeat). If desired, fish can be added to the soup. Boil over low heat and cover the pot. Simmer for 5 to 7 minutes or until the clams open. Serve while hot. Pair with crusty bread.

EGGPLANT AND TAHINI (BABA GHANNOUJ)

Serves 1 dish

1 large eggplant
1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
4 – 5 tablespoons tahini
2 cloves garlic
1 1/2 teaspoons of salt
1/4 cup fine chopped fresh parsley

- Step 1.** Remove green leafy part around stem of the eggplant but do not remove the stem.
- Step 2.** Place in a hot oven 450 degrees about 15 to 20 minutes or until soft. Allow to cool.
- Step 3.** Carefully remove the skin while holding the stem. Mash the pulp thoroughly with a fork or you may use a food processor. Gradually beat in the lemon juice alternately with the tahini.
- Step 4.** Crush the garlic with salt and mix into a paste. Blend the garlic/salt mixture into the eggplant mixture. Adjust salt to taste.

Best way to eat: Pour mixture into shallow serving dishes and garnish with chopped parsley. Serve with pita bread, fresh or toasted.



ITALIAN SAUSAGE SOUP WITH TORTELLINI

Serves 8

1 pound Sweet Italian sausage (casings removed)
1 cup chopped onion
2 cloves minced garlic
5 cups beef broth
1/2 cup water
1/2 cup red wine
4 large pieces peeled, seeded and chopped tomatoes
1 cup thinly sliced carrots
1/2 tablespoon packed fresh basil leaves
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
1 (8 oz) can tomato sauce
1 1/2 cups sliced zucchini
8 ounces fresh tortellini pasta
3 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley



- Step 1.** Brown sausage using a five quart Dutch oven. Remove the sausage and drain. Reserve one tbsp of the drippings.
- Step 2.** Use the drippings to sauté the garlic and onions. Pour the beef broth, wine and water then add the tomatoes, tomato sauce, carrots, Basil, oregano, and the sausage. Stir the mixture and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 30 minutes. Leave it uncovered.
- Step 3.** Remove the fat from the soup. Add the zucchini and parsley and stir. Simmer again for another 30 minutes. Add the Tortellini. Garnish each serving with Parmesan cheese. Serve hot.

LENTEN TOMATO SOUP

Serves 6 to 8

1 kg of tomatoes, peeled, deseeded and grate
3 cups of water
2-3 cloves of garlic, crushed
1 cup of red or white wine
1 teaspoon of sugar
2 tablespoons of celery, finely sliced
1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 medium onion
Salt to taste
Freshly ground black pepper
6 cups of small macaroni



Place the tomatoes and the water in a pan and bring to a boil. Add the remaining ingredients except for the macaroni, and simmer for 20 minutes. Remove the onion and the garlic, add the macaroni and cook until the pasta is ready. If the soup becomes too thick, add a little water to thin it. Season with salt and pepper.

MALTESE VEGETARIAN STEW

Serves 4

4 large tender artichokes	Dashes of vinegar
Juice of 1 lemon	2 tablespoons flat leaf parsley, chopped
3 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil	Salt, and freshly ground black pepper
4 onions, finely chopped	200g broad beans, skinned
2 clove garlic, crushed	200g peas, shelled
400g canned chopped tomatoes, chopped	4 eggs
Pinch of sugar	4 tablespoon ricotta cheese

- Step 1.** Prepare the artichokes by removing all tough outer leaves. Completely cut off the tops of remaining leaves, cut in half and scoop out the choke using a teaspoon.
- Step 2.** Place in a bowl of water and lemon juice.
- Step 3.** In the meantime, heat the oil in a saucepan, add the onions and gently fry until soft.
- Step 4.** Add the garlic and as soon as it is fragrant, add the tomatoes.
- Step 5.** Bring to the boil add the sugar, vinegar, parsley and seasoning, Lower the flame and add the artichoke hearts.
- Step 6.** Cover and simmer until the artichokes are soft and cooked through, stirring occasionally for about 30 minutes.
- Step 7.** Add the broad beans and peas. Continue simmering until the vegetables are tender, about 3 minutes.
- Step 8.** Make 4 hollows with a wooden spoon and break the eggs into them. Spoon ricotta in between the eggs. Cover while the eggs, beans and peas cook. As soon as the egg is poached, serve the stew hot. Spoon Ricotta over eggs.





Dinner

AUBERGINE STEAK WITH LENTIL DRESSING

Serves 4

2 medium aubergines
250g mozzarella, sliced
2 tablespoons basil

For the marinade:

4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 lemon, juice only
1 clove garlic, chopped
Freshly ground black pepper

For the dressing:

3 tablespoons black beluga lentils, cooked
200g plum tomatoes
4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Step 1. Slice the aubergines lengthways into 4 long tongues.

Step 2. Combine all the marinade ingredients. Pour the marinade over the aubergine steaks and leave for 30 minutes.

Step 3. Preheat a grill to medium; place the aubergine tongues on a baking sheet and grill for 5-6 minutes on each side.

Step 4. Top the flesh side of each tongue with a slice of mozzarella cheese and return to the grill for a further 4-5 minutes, until the cheese is melted and slightly browned.

For the dressing:

Step 1. Combine the lentils, tomatoes, extra-virgin olive oil and balsamic vinegar in a large bowl and season to taste.

Step 2. Place the aubergine steaks on a large platter and spoon over the dressing. Add a good grinding of freshly ground black pepper, scatter over the basil leaves and serve.



FISH WITH CHERMOULA

Serves 6

For Chermoula:

1/2 teaspoon coriander seeds	2 tablespoons preserved lemon juice or fresh lemon juice to taste
12 whole black peppercorns	2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1/4 teaspoon dried hot red pepper flakes	2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh coriander
a large pinch saffron threads, crumbled	1 garlic clove, minced
1/2 teaspoon coarse salt	
1 teaspoon paprika	6 skinless small fish fillets such as sea bass, red snapper, or any other firm white lean fish
1 medium onion, minced	2 tablespoons unsalted butter
1/3 cup finely chopped fresh parsley leaves	1/2 cup water
2 tablespoons minced preserved lemon peel	4 fennel bulbs, trimmed and cut lengthwise into thin strips, reserve fronds for garnish if desired

Step 1. In a mortar with a pestle, an electric spice grinder, or a cleaned coffee grinder grind fine coriander seeds, peppercorns, red pepper flakes, and saffron. Transfer spice mixture to a small bowl and stir in remaining chermoula ingredients.

Step 2. Lightly oil a shallow baking dish just large enough to hold fillets in one layer. Arrange fillets, seasoned with salt and pepper, in dish and top evenly with chermoula. Chill fillets, covered 1 hour.

Step 3. Preheat oven to 350°F.

Step 4. In a large heavy skillet melt butter in water over moderately high heat. Add fennel and cook, covered, stirring occasionally, 10 minutes. Cook fennel, uncovered, stirring occasionally, until tender, 5 to 10 minutes more, and season with salt and pepper.

Step 5. While fennel is cooking, bake chilled fish in oven until it just flakes, 10 to 15 minutes.

Step 6. Serve each fillet on a bed of fennel and garnish with fennel fronds.



GREEK FAVA WITH GRILLED SQUID

Serves 6

3/4 cup yellow split peas

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided

1 small red onion, finely chopped

2 cups vegetable broth, or water, plus more as needed

12 ounces squid, cleaned

3/4 teaspoon salt, divided

1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper, plus more to taste

2 tablespoons lemon juice

2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh parsley

1 lemon, cut into wedges

Step 1. Rinse split peas under running water to remove any grit; pick out any small pebbles.

Step 2. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Add the split peas and toss to coat. Add broth (or water) and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cover. Cook, stirring occasionally to prevent sticking and skimming any foam off the surface, until most of the liquid has been absorbed and the split peas are very tender, 45 minutes to 1 hour; they should disintegrate easily. If the liquid is gone before the peas are done, add a little more liquid and continue cooking.

Step 3. Meanwhile, cut squid body (or tubes) into 1/2-inch rings; leave the tentacles whole. Combine rings and tentacles with 1 1/2 teaspoons oil, 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper in a medium bowl. Set aside.

Step 4. Transfer the peas to a food processor; add 1 1/2 teaspoons oil, lemon juice and the remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt and process until creamy, with a consistency similar to mashed potatoes. Spread the puree (fava) onto a serving platter.

Step 5. Preheat grill to medium-high.

Step 6. Thread the squid rings and tentacles on skewers. Oil the grill rack. Grill the squid, turning once, until firm but tender, about 4 minutes total. Remove the grilled squid from the skewers and arrange on top of the fava. Drizzle with the remaining 1 tablespoon oil, season with pepper and sprinkle with parsley. Serve with lemon wedges.



GRILLED TUNA WITH PROVENÇAL VEGETABLES AND EASY AIOLI

Serves 4

Nonstick extra-virgin olive oil spray
4 5-ounce albacore tuna steaks
2 zucchini, quartered lengthwise
1 eggplant, cut lengthwise into 3/4-inch-thick slices
4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 cups assorted cherry tomatoes, halved
2 teaspoons herbes de Provence*
1 garlic clove, minced
Easy Aioli

** A dried herb mixture; sold in the spice section of supermarkets and at specialty foods stores. If unavailable, a combination of dried thyme, basil, savory, and fennel seeds can be substituted.*

Step 1. Spray grill with nonstick spray. Prepare barbecue (medium-high heat).

Step 2. Brush tuna steaks, zucchini, and eggplant with olive oil; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Grill vegetables until tender and lightly charred, turning occasionally, about 12 minutes. Remove from grill and cut into bite-size chunks. Place vegetables, tomatoes, herbes de Provence, and garlic in large bowl; toss to blend. Set aside. Grill tuna steaks to desired doneness, about 4 minutes per side for medium-rare. Place tuna on plates, top with vegetables, and serve with aioli.



HERB FISH PARCELS WITH ROASTED VEGETABLES

Serves 4

400g packet pre-cooked baby potatoes, halved

2 large (300g) zucchini, quartered lengthways

1 medium (200g) red capsicum, sliced thickly

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

4 (800g) blue eye fillets (or skinless boneless thick fish fillets)

1 medium (140g) lemon, sliced thinly

1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh chives

2 teaspoons finely chopped fresh dill

1 teaspoon finely grated lemon rind

40g butter, chopped

Chives and dill for serving, extra

Step 1. Preheat oven to very hot (240°C/220°C fan-forced.) Lightly grease a large baking dish.

Step 2. Place potatoes, zucchini and capsicum in prepared dish. Dot potatoes with included parsley butter. Brush zucchini and capsicum with the oil. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Roast for 20 minutes.

Step 3. Meanwhile, place four 30cm square sheets of baking paper on bench. Place fish fillets on centre of pieces of paper. Top each fillet with the lemon, herbs, rind and butter. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Bring two sides of the paper together, fold into a parcel to completely enclose the fish. Tuck side flaps underneath. Place parcels on an oven tray.

Step 4. Reduce the oven temperature to hot (220°C/200°C fan-forced.) Bake the fish parcels, on the top shelf, for about 10 minutes or until cooked as desired.

Step 5. Serve with vegetables and sprinkle with chopped chives and dill sprigs, if desired.

Not suitable to freeze. Fish not suitable to microwave.



MEDITERRANEAN FARFALLE

Serves 6

1 pound farfalle (bow tie pasta)
10 oz. salmon fillet, diced
20 asparagus spears, cut to half
3 tablespoons sliced green olives
1 tablespoon capers
2 1/2 cups tomato sauce
75 ml. dry white wine
1 tablespoon chopped parsley
1 teaspoon minced garlic
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste



In a large skillet, heat the olive oil and saute the asparagus, garlic and olives. When the salmon cubes are half cooked, deglaze with the white wine. Cook for 2 minutes more and add the tomato sauce, capers and chopped parsley. Reduce the sauce slightly. Boil the farfalle according to the package instructions, strain them and toss them in the sauce. The recipe is for 4 portions of Mediterranean Farfalle.

MUSTARD – CRUSTED SALMON

Serves 4

1 1/4 pounds center-cut salmon fillets, cut into 4 portions
1/4 teaspoon salt, or to taste
Freshly ground pepper, to taste
1/4 cup reduced-fat sour cream
2 tablespoons stone-ground mustard
2 teaspoons lemon juice
Lemon wedges

- Step 1.** Preheat broiler. Line a broiler pan or baking sheet with foil, then coat it with cooking spray.
- Step 2.** Place salmon pieces, skin-side down, on the prepared pan. Season with salt and pepper. Combine sour cream, mustard and lemon juice in a small bowl. Spread evenly over the salmon.
- Step 3.** Broil the salmon 5 inches from the heat source until it is opaque in the center, 10 to 12 minutes. Serve with lemon wedges.



PEPPERED SHRIMP ALFREDO

Serves 4

8 ounces Penne pasta	1 pound peeled and deveined medium shrimp
1/4 cup butter	1 (16 oz) jar Alfredo sauce
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil	1/2 cup grated Romano cheese
1 piece diced onion	1/2 cup cream
2 cloves minced garlic	1 teaspoon cayenne pepper or more to taste
1 diced red bell pepper	Salt and pepper to taste
1/2 pound diced Portobello mushrooms	1/4 cup chopped parsley

Step 1. Boil salted water in a large pot. Cook the pasta in the boiling water for 8 to 10 minutes. Immediately drain the water once the pasta is cooked. Set aside.

Step 2. In a saucepan, melt the butter over medium heat and add the extra-virgin olive oil. Add the onion and stir for 2 minutes or until the onion becomes soft and translucent. Add the red pepper, garlic and mushrooms. Stir and cook for 2 minutes over medium high heat or until everything is soft.

Step 3. Add the shrimp and cook until the texture becomes pinkish. Introduce the Alfredo sauce, the Romano cheese, and cream. Simmer but make sure to stir constantly for 5 minutes or until the sauce has thickened. Add cayenne, pepper, and salt to taste. Remove from heat and add the pasta in the sauce. Garnish individual serving with chopped parsley



ROASTED FILLET OF SEA BASS WITH MEDITERRANEAN MASHED POTATO

Serves 4

For the potatoes:

2 yellow peppers, cut into 1cm cubes
15 cherry tomatoes
1 large onion, cut into 1cm cubes
10 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
1 pinch black pepper
3 large potatoes
400ml full-fat milk
2 handfuls pitted black Kalamata olives, in extra-virgin olive oil
150g parmesan, grated

For the fish:

4 sea bass
4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil



- Step 1.** Set the oven to 220°C/gas8. Place the peppers, cherry tomatoes and onion on a baking tray with 5 tablespoons of extra-virgin olive oil, season with salt and freshly ground black pepper and roast for 20 minutes.
- Step 2.** In the meantime, boil the potatoes until soft. Drain and mash them.
- Step 3.** Return them to the saucepan; beat in the milk and season to taste. Mix well until smooth and then stir in the roasted vegetables, the olives and the Parmesan cheese.
- Step 4.** To prepare the fish, heat the remaining extra-virgin olive oil in a large frying pan and gently fry the fish fillets, skin side down ONLY, until the skin is crisp and golden. Transfer to the oven and roast for 5 minutes, until cooked through.
- Step 5.** To serve, place a pastry ring in the middle of a plate. Fill with the mash potato mixture and then gently lift the ring away. Place a sea bass fillet on top of the mash potato, drizzle some extra-virgin olive oil on top, grind over a little black pepper and serve immediately

SAFFRON RICE SUPREME (TIMMAN AZZ'AFFARAN)

1 1/4 cups converted rice
1/3 to 1/2 cup yellow raisins
1/3 cup blanched almonds, slivered
1 teaspoon ground coriander seeds
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 teaspoon saffron threads, slightly crushed
Salt
Pepper



- Step 1.** Prepare the rice in advance. Fluff the cooked grains and let cool to room temperature.
- Step 2.** Soak the raisins in hot water for about 10 minutes; drain
- Step 3.** Sauté the almonds and spices in the extra-virgin olive oil over low heat for about 2 minutes. Add the raisins and saffron and toss together for 1 minute, taking care that the raisins do not burn.
- Step 4.** Add the cooked rice and toss to color each grain and coat it with spices. Sprinkle with salt and freshly ground pepper to taste.

SHELLFISH PAELLA RISOTTO

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 onion, chopped
1/2 pound hot Italian sausages, casings removed
1 pound clams, scrubbed
1/2 pound mussels, scrubbed, debearded
4 8-ounce bottle clam juice

1 teaspoon saffron threads
2 cups arborio rice or medium-grain rice
1/2 cup dry white wine
1/2 pound uncooked medium shrimp, peeled, deveined
1 10-ounce package frozen peas, thawed
2 large plum tomatoes, seeded, chopped

Step 1. Heat 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil in heavy large saucepan over medium heat. Add chopped onion and cook until almost tender, stirring occasionally, about 5 minutes.

Step 2. Add sausage meat. Cook until sausage is no longer pink, breaking up with fork, about 5 minutes. Add clams and mussels. Increase heat to medium-high, cover and cook until shells open, about 5 minutes. Transfer clams and mussels to medium bowl, discarding any that do not open. Cover shellfish and keep warm.

Step 3. Meanwhile, combine clam juice and saffron threads in small saucepan; bring mixture to simmer. Reduce heat to low; keep warm.

Step 4. Add arborio rice to same saucepan that clams and mussels were cooked in and stir 2 minutes over medium heat. Add dry white wine and cook until wine is evaporated, stirring constantly, about 3 minutes. Add warm clam juice mixture and simmer until rice is just tender and liquid is creamy, stirring frequently, about 20 minutes.

Step 5. Mix shrimp, peas and chopped tomatoes into risotto and cook until shrimp are just cooked through, stirring frequently, about 3 minutes. Season risotto to taste with salt and pepper. Top risotto with clams and mussels and serve immediately.





Sweets

CHOCOLATE CAKE

Serves 8

200g sponge fingers
200g dark chocolate
200g butter
5 eggs, separated
5 tablespoons brandy

- Step 1.** Preheat the oven to 170°C/gas 3.
- Step 2.** Process the sponge fingers in a food processor until finely ground.
- Step 3.** Melt the chocolate and the butter in a mixing bowl suspended over a pan of simmering water. Set aside to cool slightly.
- Step 4.** In a separate bowl, whisk the egg whites until soft peaks form.
- Step 5.** Place the ground sponge fingers in a bowl. Stir in the brandy, mixing well.
- Step 6.** Beat the yolks, one by one, into the melted chocolate mixture.
- Step 7.** Fold the whisked egg whites into the chocolate mixture, then the ground sponge fingers.
- Step 8.** Place the mixture in a greased, lined 20cm cake tin and smooth the surface.
- Step 9.** Bake for 30 minutes until set. Remove and cool on a wire rack.



CITRUS SALAD WITH LEMON SORBET

Serves 4

1 orange
1 blood orange
1 white-fleshed grapefruit
1 pink grapefruit
1 lemon
1 lime
2 cloves
200 ml water
200g sugar, plus extra to cover strips of zest

For the sorbet:
200ml lemon juice
200 ml water
200ml sugar syrup

For the syrup:
200 ml water
200g caster sugar
40g glucose syrup



- Step 1.** Pare the zest from the oranges, grapefruits, lemon and lime. Slice into very thin strips and put in a saucepan with the sugar, cloves and the water. Bring to the boil and blanch for about 45 minutes until the strips are soft. Drain, discard the cloves and leave to cool.
- Step 2.** Using a small sharp knife, cut a horizontal slice from the top and bottom of the citrus fruit, then remove the remaining pith by cutting down the sides, following the contours of the fruit.
- Step 3.** Working over a large bowl to catch the juice, cut down between the membrane and each segment. Ease out the flesh, and remove any pips. Put the segments in the bowl with the juice. Cover with cling film and put in the fridge.
- Step 4.** Now make the sorbet. Mix together the lemon juice, water and the syrup.
- Step 5.** Pour into an ice cream maker and process according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Step 6.** Meanwhile, put the strips of citrus zest into a bag with the caster sugar and shake so that the strips become well covered. (Put any excess sugar in a jar and keep for another use.)
- Step 7.** Remove the fruit from the fridge and place in a serving bowl. Sprinkle with the sugared zest and a scoop of the lemon sorbet. Serve immediately.

FRUIT COUSCOUS WITH HONEY – CINNAMON YOGURT

Serves 4

1 cup fresh unsweetened orange juice
1/4 cup water
1 tablespoon sugar
1 cup couscous
2 cups sliced fresh strawberries
2 cups red or white seedless grapes
2 tablespoons liquid honey
8 tablespoons yogurt
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon



- Step 1.** Heat the orange juice, water and sugar in a saucepan over a high heat until it comes to the boil.
- Step 2.** Place the couscous in a heat-proof bowl, pour over the boiling liquid, and cover with a plate or clean dishcloth to trap the steam.
- Step 3.** After 5 minutes fluff up the couscous with a fork, then stir through the grapes and sliced strawberries.
- Step 4.** Cover and cool in the fridge.
- Step 5.** While the fruit couscous is cooling mix together the yogurt, liquid honey and cinnamon in a bowl.
- Step 6.** Serve the fruit couscous with the honey-cinnamon yogurt drizzled on top (you can also add a light dusting of cinnamon if you like).

Variations: Fresh sliced peaches and berries like raspberries and blackberries also go perfectly with this dessert.

LAVENDER AND BANANA BASTILLAS

Serves 10 or more

2 ripe bananas, diced into 5 mm pieces
1 teaspoon dried lavender flowers
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
pinch dried thyme
1 teaspoon honey
12 sheets filo pastry
2 tablespoon butter, melted
Icing sugar, sifted, to serve



- Step 1.** Preheat oven to 200°C (180°C fan forced). Combine banana, lavender, cinnamon, thyme and honey in a bowl and mix well.
- Step 2.** Lay out one filo sheet, brush with melted butter, top with another sheet of filo and brush again then add and butter one last filo sheet. Cut filo stack into three lengthways.
- Step 3.** Place a large spoonful of mixture in the left corner of one of the pastry strips and fold pastry over filling to create a triangle, then fold continuously to make a triangle shaped parcel like a samosa. Brush finished parcel with more melted butter and place on a baking tray. Repeat process with remaining filo and mixture.
- Step 4.** Bake bastilla in hot oven for 10– 15 minutes, or until browned. Dust with icing sugar and serve immediately.

MINT ICE CREAM

Makes about 1 quart

3/4 cup sugar
2 large eggs
1 tablespoons cornstarch
2 cups half-and-half
1 cup heavy cream
2 teaspoons peppermint extract
6 drops green food coloring (optional)



- Step 1.** In a medium mixing bowl, beat the sugar into the eggs until thickened and pale yellow. Beat in the cornstarch and set aside.
- Step 2.** Bring the half-and-half to a simmer in a heavy medium saucepan. Slowly beat the hot half-and-half into the eggs and sugar. Pour the entire mixture back into the pan and place over low heat. Stir constantly with a whisk or wooden spoon until the custard thickens slightly. Be careful not to let the mixture boil or the eggs will scramble. Remove from the heat and pour the hot custard through a strainer into a large, clean bowl. Allow the custard to cool slightly, then stir in the cream, peppermint extract, and food coloring, if using. Cover and refrigerate until cold or overnight.
- Step 3.** Stir the chilled custard, then freeze in 1 or 2 batches in your ice cream machine according to the manufacturer's instruction. When finished, the ice cream will be soft but ready to eat. For firmer ice cream, transfer to a freezer-safe container and freeze at least 2 hours.

ZUCCHINI, FETTA AND MINT TART

Serves 4 to 6

2 sheets frozen puff pastry, thawed according to packet directions
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 red onions, sliced thinly
3 zucchinis, cut into ribbons using a potato peeler
1/4 cup fresh mint leaves
150g fetta
4 eggs, beaten lightly
100ml cream
Salt and freshly ground black pepper



- Step 1.** Preheated oven to 190°C (170°C fan-forced). Line tart tin with puff pastry, pressing it against the ridges of the tin so that it stays in place. (To join two sheets together, moisten edges with a little water and press together.) Trim any pastry rising above the top of the tin. Now place a sheet of baking paper over the pastry so that it covers the base and goes up the sides. Place some baking weights, dry rice or dried beans on the paper to weigh it down. Bake for 10 minutes. Remove baking paper and weights and cook for another 10 minutes. Allow to cool but leave the oven on.
- Step 2.** Meanwhile, heat oil in frying pan, add onions and cook for 10 minutes until soft. Spoon onions over the bottom of the pastry case, top with zucchini and mint leaves, then crumble fetta over the top.
- Step 3.** In a separate bowl, whisk together the eggs and cream and season with salt and pepper.
- Step 4.** Pour egg mixture over tart filling and bake for another 20 minutes until just set.
- Step 5.** Allow to cool to room temperature before serving.