



The Mediterranean Diet
Recipe Book
Twentieth Edition

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Table of Contents</i>	2
BREAKFAST AND LIGHT LUNCHES	
<i>Baba Ghanouj</i>	5
<i>Crab-Stuffed Mushrooms</i>	6
<i>Greek Honey Dough Balls (Loukoumades)</i>	7
<i>Linguine with Clam Sauce</i>	8
<i>Penne with Roasted Pear, Goat Cheese and Walnuts</i>	9
<i>Rigatoni with Robust Red Sauce, Tuna and Broccoli</i>	10
<i>Roasted Ratatouille</i>	12
<i>Salmon with Honey-Coriander Glaze</i>	13
<i>Sea Scallops with Sherry and Saffron Couscous</i>	14
<i>Steamed Cod with Ginger and Scallions</i>	15
SALADS	
<i>Campanelle Pasta Salad</i>	17
<i>Cornmeal-Crusted Tilapia Salad</i>	18
<i>Cucumber Salad (Salata)</i>	19
<i>Green Bean Salad (Bohnensalat)</i>	20
<i>Israeli Couscous Salad with Summer Vegetables</i>	21
<i>Lemon-Rosemary Infused Potato Salad with Roasted Garlic Mayonnaise</i>	22
<i>Moroccan Chickpea and Couscous Salad</i>	23
<i>Three Bean Salad</i>	24
SOUPS AND VEGETARIANS	

<u>Baked Artichokes with Panko, Black Olives and Shitake Mushrooms</u>	<u>26</u>
<u>Black Bean and Corn Stew</u>	<u>28</u>
<u>Cabbage Patch Soup</u>	<u>29</u>
<u>Chunky Tomato Soup</u>	<u>30</u>
<u>Italian Fish Soup</u>	<u>31</u>
<u>Kale Soup (Caldo Verde)</u>	<u>32</u>
<u>Roasted Vegetable Pasta</u>	<u>33</u>

DINNER

<u>Baked Scrod in Cider</u>	<u>35</u>
<u>Grilled Fish with Robust Red Sauce and Couscous Salad</u>	<u>36</u>
<u>Italian Grilled Sea Bass</u>	<u>38</u>
<u>Moroccan Chicken Kebobs</u>	<u>39</u>
<u>Penne Rigate alla Ricotta e Noci</u>	<u>40</u>
<u>Roasted Garlic, Pumpkin and Red Pepper Risotto with Spinach and Chickpeas</u>	<u>41</u>
<u>Samlon Risotto with Dill and Lemon</u>	<u>42</u>
<u>Sicilian Swordfish</u>	<u>43</u>
<u>Spinach and Ricotta Lasagna</u>	<u>44</u>
<u>Sweet Moroccan Couscous with Rasins, Almonds and Argan Oil</u>	<u>46</u>
<u>Tomato, Basil and Asiago Frittata</u>	<u>47</u>

SWEETS

<u>Apricot-Thyme Galette</u>	<u>49</u>
<u>Bittersweet Chocolate-Cherry Sorbet</u>	<u>50</u>
<u>Peach, Plum, and Apricot Crisp</u>	<u>51</u>
<u>Peaches with Cava and Lemon Verbana</u>	<u>52</u>
<u>Seared Figs and White Peaches with Balsamic Reduction</u>	<u>53</u>



Baba Ghanouj

- 1 large eggplant
- 3 - 4 large garlic cloves, unpeeled
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 tablespoon sesame seed paste (tahini)
- 2-3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

One lemon - start
with juice from 1/2
Salt & pepper to taste

Breakfast & Light Lunches

- Step 1.** Prick the eggplant all over with a fork. Place on a sheet tray in the oven for 25 minutes.
- Step 2.** After 25 minutes place the unpeeled garlic cloves on the sheet tray with the eggplant and cook another 15-20 minutes, until the eggplant and garlic cloves are soft. Allow the eggplant and garlic to cool.
- Step 3.** Cut the eggplant in half and scoop out the flesh into a food processor. Squeeze the cooked garlic cloves out of their peels and add to the food processor. Add the spices, sesame seed paste, olive oil and juice of 1/2 of the lemon. Pulse until smooth. Season to taste. Serve room temperature.
- Step 4.** Serve with flatbread of your choice.



CRAB-STUFFED MUSHROOMS

24 Medium-Sized Mushrooms (about 1-1/4 pounds)
5 tablespoons butter or margarine
2 tablespoons green onions, minced (use part of tops)
1 teaspoon lemon juice
1 cup (about 8 oz.) fresh or canned crab meat
1/2 cup soft bread crumbs
1 egg, beaten
1/2 teaspoon dill weed
1/4 cup shredded jack or cheddar cheese
1/4 cup dry white wine
Lemon Wedges



Step 1. Remove stems from mushrooms and finely chop stems.

Step 2. Melt 2 tablespoons of the butter or margarine in a frying pan over medium heat. Add mushroom stems and onions and cook, stirring, until onion is limp.

Step 3. Remove from heat and stir in lemon juice, crab, bread crumbs, egg, dill weed, and 1/4 cup of the cheese until well blended.

Step 4. Melt remaining 3 tablespoons of the butter or margarine in a 9X13-inch baking pan.

Step 5. Turn mushroom caps in butter or margarine to coat evenly around filling in each mushroom cap, pressing it in firmly.

Step 6. Cover and refrigerate until next day.

Step 7. To bake, sprinkle mushrooms with remaining cheese and pour wine into pan.

Step 8. Bake, uncovered, in a 400°F oven for 15-20 minutes, or until hot throughout.

Step 9. Serve hot with lemon wedges.

GREEK HONEY DOUGH BALLS (LOUKOUMADES)

Serves 10

For the Batter:

1 active dry yeast
2-1/4 cups warm water
3 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
Canola oil, for frying
Cinnamon to taste
1 to 2 cups finely ground walnuts

For the Syrup:

3 cups water
1-1/2 cups sugar
1 cup honey, or to taste
1 stick cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon lemon zest
1/4 teaspoon orange zest

- Step 1.** To make the batter, dissolve the yeast in 1 cup of the warm water. Sift flour and salt together in a large bowl and make a well in the center. Add the proofed yeast to the well and stir gently with a wooden spoon. A little at a time, add the remaining 1-1/4 cups water until the batter thickens. (Unlike dough, this batter should fall slowly off the tip of a spoon.) Stir well. Cover with plastic wrap or tea towels and place in a warm, draft-free area to rise for about 3 hours, or until doubled in bulk.
- Step 2.** To make the syrup, put all ingredients in a saucepan and warm over low heat, stirring occasionally. Keep warm, but do not let boil.
- Step 3.** In a large pot or electric frying pan, heat 4 to 5 inches of oil to 375 degrees. Give the risen batter several stirs to remove air pockets. Carefully push one heaping tablespoon of batter at a time into the hot oil with a second spoon. Cook in batches of about 10. The loukoumaes will expand, puff, and rise to the surface of the oil. Turn until both sides are an even golden brown. Remove, drain on paper towels, and place in the warm



syrup for several minutes. Remove from syrup with slotted spoon, place in a large bowl, sprinkle with cinnamon and walnuts, and toss to coat. Serve hot, piled high in a large bowl.

LINGUINE WITH CLAM SAUCE

Serves 8

1 pound linguine
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
1 medium onion, chopped
3 cans (6.5 ounces each) chopped clams
1 tablespoon dried parsley
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
1/2 teaspoon dried basil
1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon black pepper
1/4 cup plain bread crumbs



Step 1. Cook linguine 11 minutes. Drain and return to pot.

Step 2. Meanwhile, heat 1/2 tablespoon oil in a 10-inch nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add onion and garlic; sauté 5 minutes.

Step 3. Strain liquid from clams and add liquid to skillet, reserving clams. Add parsley, oregano, basil, pepper flakes, salt and pepper to pan. Simmer 5 minutes then stir in clams; cook 2 minutes. Stir into pasta in pot; toss to mix. Cover to keep warm.

Step 4. Heat remaining 1/2 tablespoon oil in a small skillet over medium-high heat and add bread crumbs. Cook, stirring, for 2 minutes or until lightly browned. Sprinkle over pasta and gently toss. Serve immediately.

PENNE WITH ROASTED PEAR, GOAT CHEESE AND WALNUTS

Serves 4 to 6

8 ounces pasta, such as penne
2 Bosc pears, ripe but firm (firmer varieties of pears work best)
1 tablespoon plus 3 1/2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 1/2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
Juice of half a lemon
1/2 cup baby arugula (rocket)
1/2 cup baby spinach
1/4 cup chopped walnuts
1/4 cup crumbled goat cheese
Pinch of sea salt



- Step 1.** Preheat oven to 425° F. Slice the pear into thin wedges, leaving the skin on and removing the center core. Toss with one tablespoon of olive oil, coating lightly, then place in baking dish and roast in oven for 10 minutes. Remove from oven, stir again, and return to oven for an additional 5 minutes. Allow to cool, then cut into smaller bite sized pieces.
- Step 2.** Mix together the remaining 3 1/2 tablespoons of olive oil with the balsamic vinegar and lemon juice. Cook penne according to package directions. Drain pasta and mix in the olive oil-vinegar-lemon juice mixture, then mix in the chopped pears, arugula and baby spinach. If desired, add a little sea salt to taste. Divide among plates and top with crumbled goat cheese and chopped walnut pieces.

RIGATONI WITH ROBUST RED SAUCE, TUNA AND BROCCOLI

Serves 2

For the Robust Red Sauce:

4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 red onions — diced
4 cloves garlic — finely chopped
28 oz (840g) canned tomatoes — chopped
1/2 cup red wine
1/2 teaspoon dried rosemary
1/2 teaspoon dried red chili flakes
1-1/2 teaspoons salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/2 teaspoon sugar
4 red bell peppers — deseeded and quartered

For the pasta:

8 ounces (240g) dried rigatoni pasta
2 cups broccoli florets
1/2 portion of the Robust Red Sauce
recipe — heated
6 oz (180g) canned tuna in olive oil —
drained and broken into chunks
Shaved or grated Parmesan cheese to
serve



To make the Robust Red Sauce:

- Step 1.** Heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium heat and cook the onions for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the garlic and cook for another 5 minutes, stirring regularly.
- Step 2.** Add the tomatoes, wine, rosemary, chili flakes, salt, pepper and sugar and bring to the boil.
- Step 3.** Cover, reduce the heat to medium and cook for 20 minutes.
- Step 4.** While the sauce simmers, place the peppers (skin side up) under a hot broiler (griller) until the skin blackens all over, about 10 minutes.
- Step 5.** Remove and cover the charred peppers with a clean dishcloth or plastic wrap for 5 minutes to allow the steam to loosen the skins from the pepper flesh.

Step 6. Peel off the blackened skin from the peppers and roughly cut the flesh into pieces then add to the sauce.

Step 7. Place the sauce into a food processor or blender and process until smooth.

RIGATONI WITH ROBUST RED SAUCE, TUNA AND BROCCOLI (CONT.)

To make the pasta:

- Step 1.** Cook the pasta in a large pot of salted boiling water, adding the broccoli to the pot for the final 5 minutes of cooking.
- Step 2.** Drain the cooked pasta and broccoli, put the sauce in the bottom of the pot and top with the hot pasta, broccoli and tuna chunks.
- Step 3.** Toss together gently to combine well and heat through.
- Step 4.** Serve the pasta with a little shaved or grated Parmesan on top.

ROASTED RATATOUILLE

Serves 4

14 ounces (420g) canned tomatoes — chopped
1 teaspoon salt
3/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/2 teaspoon caster sugar
2 cloves garlic — minced
1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh parsley
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 red onion — thinly sliced and separated into rings
2 red peppers — cut into strips
1 green pepper — cut into strips
2 zucchini (courgette) — cut into half-inch rounds
1/2 eggplant (aubergine) — cut into 1-inch cubes



Step 1. Preheat oven to 350F/180C.

Step 2. Mix together the canned tomatoes, garlic, salt, pepper, sugar, parsley and thyme until combined.

Step 3. Oil a baking dish with 2 tablespoons of the olive oil.

Step 4. Start by layering a quarter of the sliced onion in the bottom of the baking dish then top with a quarter each of red and green peppers, zucchini and eggplant.

Step 5. Spoon a quarter of the tomato mixture and 1 tablespoon of olive oil over each layer.

Step 6. Repeat the process to make 4 layers.

Step 7. Cover and bake for 1 hour, then uncover and bake for a further 15 minutes.

SALMON WITH HONEY-CORIANDER GLAZE

Serves 4

- 1 tablespoon whole coriander seeds
- 1/4 cup honey
- 5 tablespoons soy sauce
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- 4 salmon fillets (5 ounces each), skinned
- 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil

Toast the coriander seeds in a dry, large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat, stirring constantly, until golden, about 3 minutes. Remove from heat; let cool. Grind seeds in a spice grinder or crush with a mortar and pestle until coarsely ground; reserve skillet.

To make the glaze:

Step 1. Stir together crushed coriander seeds, honey, soy sauce, and lemon juice in a small bowl until combined.

Step 2. Lightly brush the top of each salmon fillet with glaze; reserve remainder. Heat oil in the nonstick skillet over medium heat until hot but not smoking. Cook salmon fillets, glazed sides down, 1 minute; reduce heat to medium-low, and cook 2 minutes more. Turn fillets over, and cook 3 minutes for medium-rare (salmon will be slightly pink in the middle), or longer if desired. Transfer to a plate; loosely cover with foil to keep warm.

Step 3. Pour remaining glaze into skillet; bring to a boil over medium heat. Cook until glaze has thickened to the consistency of syrup, about 1 minute. Serve salmon with glaze on the side.



SEA SCALLOPS WITH SHERRY AND SAFFRON COUSCOUS

Serves 4

1 pound sea scallops, muscles removed and discarded
1 1/2 teaspoons coarse salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1/4 cup dry sherry
2 1/2 cups homemade or low-sodium canned chicken stock
3 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into small pieces
Pinch of saffron
1 tablespoon fresh thyme
2 cups couscous

Step 1. Season scallops on both sides with 1 teaspoon salt and pepper. Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a saute pan over medium-high heat. Add scallops (work in batches; use remaining oil if necessary, depending on size of pan); cook until golden brown and caramelized, about 1 minute on each side. When cooked, pour off any fat remaining in pan. Set aside scallops on a plate covered with foil.

Step 2. Return pan to heat. Deglaze pan with sherry, scraping browned bits from bottom of pan with a wooden spoon. Simmer until sherry is reduced by two-thirds. Add stock, butter, saffron, thyme, and remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt. Bring to a boil; add couscous. Cover the pan; remove from heat. Let sit for 5 minutes. Uncover; fluff with a fork; adjust seasoning if necessary. Serve with scallops.



STEAMED COD WITH GINGER AND SCALLIONS

Serves 4

4 skinless cod fillets, (6 to 8 ounces each)
3 tablespoons rice vinegar
2 tablespoons soy sauce
2 tablespoons finely grated, peeled fresh ginger
Coarse salt and ground pepper
6 scallions, green parts cut into 3-inch lengths

Step 1. In a large skillet, combine 3 tablespoons rice vinegar, 2 tablespoons soy sauce, and 2 tablespoons finely grated peeled fresh ginger.

Step 2. Season both sides of 4 skinless cod fillets (6 to 8 ounces each) with coarse salt and ground pepper; place in skillet with vinegar mixture. Bring to a boil; reduce heat to a gentle simmer. Cover; cook until fish is almost opaque throughout, 6 to 8 minutes.

Step 3. Meanwhile, cut green parts of 6 scallions into 3-inch lengths; thinly slice lengthwise. Scatter over fish; cook (covered) until fish is opaque throughout and scallions are just wilted, about 2 minutes more.





Salads

CAMPANELLE PASTA SALAD

1 pound campanelle pasta
1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 small red onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 (6-ounces) can Italian tuna in oil, drained
2 cups cherry tomatoes, halved
8 ounces frozen artichoke hearts, thawed and quartered
2 tablespoons capers, rinsed and drained
2 tablespoons chopped fresh thyme leaves
1/4 cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves
Salt and freshly ground black pepper



- Step 1.** Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil over high heat. Add the pasta and cook, stirring occasionally, until tender but still firm to the bite, 8 to 10 minutes. Drain, reserving about 1 cup of the pasta water.
- Step 2.** In a 14-inch skillet, heat 1/4 cup of the oil over medium high. Throw in the onion and cook, stirring frequently until soft, about 5 minutes. Stir in the garlic and cook for 30 seconds, or until aromatic. Add the tuna to the skillet and, using a fork, break it into chunks. Spoon in the cherry tomatoes, artichoke hearts, capers, and thyme. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the tomatoes begin to soften, 8 to 10 minutes.
- Step 3.** Put in the pasta, the remaining oil, and the parsley. Toss until all the ingredients are coated, using a little pasta water, if needed, to thin out the sauce. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Transfer to a large bowl and serve warm or at room temperature.

CORNMEAL-CRUSTED TILAPIA SALAD

Serves 4

4 (6-inch) corn tortillas, cut into 1/4-inch strips	1/4 cup preshredded reduced-fat 4-cheese Mexican blend cheese
Cooking spray	6 cups chopped romaine lettuce
1 teaspoon chili powder, divided	1 1/2 cups chopped red bell pepper (about 1 large)
3/4 teaspoon salt, divided	1 cup halved grape tomatoes
1/4 cup all-purpose flour (about 1 ounce)	1/4 cup thinly sliced red onion
1/4 cup yellow cornmeal	2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
1 teaspoon onion flakes, crushed	1 1/2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
4 (6-ounce) tilapia fillets	1/4 teaspoon Dijon mustard
7 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil	

Step 1. Preheat oven to 425°.

Step 2. Place tortilla strips on a baking sheet lined with foil; lightly coat tortilla strips with cooking spray. Sprinkle strips with 1/2 teaspoon chili powder and 1/4 teaspoon salt. Bake at 425° for 10 minutes or until crisp, and set aside.

Step 3. Lightly spoon flour into a dry measuring cup; level with a knife. Combine flour, cornmeal, onion flakes, and the remaining 1/2 teaspoon chili powder in a shallow dish. Sprinkle fish with 1/4 teaspoon salt; dredge in cornmeal mixture.

Step 4. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add fish; cook 3 minutes on each side or until browned and fish flakes easily when tested with a fork or until desired degree of doneness.



Step 5. Combine romaine and next 4 ingredients (through cilantro) in a large bowl. Combine juice, mustard, and remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt in a small bowl, stirring with a whisk. Gradually add remaining 4 teaspoons oil, stirring constantly with a whisk. Drizzle juice mixture over lettuce mixture; toss gently to coat. Place 1 1/2 cups salad mixture on each of 4 plates; sprinkle each serving with 1 tablespoon cheese. Place 1 fish fillet on each salad; top with 5 tortilla strips.

CUCUMBER SALAD (SALATA)

Serves 6 to 8

1 pound young Kirby cucumbers, not peeled
2 teaspoons salt
1/2 cup cider or malt vinegar
2 teaspoons sugar
1/2 inch of fresh garlic root, chopped fine
1 garlic clove, put through a press
2 tablespoons chopped mint
3 scallions, sliced thin
1/2 teaspoon chopped fresh hot chili (optional)



- Step 1.** Slice the cucumbers thin and toss them with the salt. Let them stand for 20 minutes. Put them in a kitchen towel and squeeze firmly; considerable water will be released.
- Step 2.** Bring the vinegar and sugar just to a boil. Cool for a few minutes, then pour it over the cucumbers. Add the ginger, garlic, mint, scallions and chili. Mix well and refrigerate.
- Step 3.** Serve cold.

GREEN BEAN SALAD (BOHNENSALAT)

Serves 4

1 pound fresh green beans
Boiling salted water
1/4 cup stock (reserved from boiling the beans)
3 tablespoons vinegar
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 medium onions, thinly sliced or chopped
1/2 teaspoon dried dill seed or herb of choice
1/2 teaspoon sugar

Cook the beans in boiling salt water until just tender. Reserve 1/4 cup of the cooking liquid; drain off the rest. Prepare sauce by combining oil, vinegar, reserved vegetable stock, onions, dill/herb, and sugar; stir until blended. Pour over beans and let it marinate several hours before serving.



ISRAELI COUSCOUS SALAD WITH SUMMER VEGETABLES

Serves 12

1/2 cup diced zucchini	1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 cup diced yellow squash	1/2 cup red bell pepper (1/4-inch dice)
2 cups Israeli couscous	1/2 cup green bell pepper (1/4-inch dice)
2 tablespoons fresh lime juice	1/2 cup yellow bell pepper (1/4-inch dice)
2 teaspoons curry powder	3 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
1 teaspoon cumin	3 tablespoons chopped fresh Italian (flat-leaf) parsley
1/2 teaspoon turmeric	Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
2 teaspoons pure chili pepper powder	

Step 1. Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Add the zucchini and yellow squash and cook just until tender but still crisp, about 2 minutes. Scoop the vegetables out of the water with a sieve, reserving the boiling water. Rinse them under cold water and set them aside.

Step 2. Add the couscous to the boiling water and cook it until tender (10 minutes or more). Drain the couscous. Rinse it well with cold running water, then drain it well again.

Step 3. In a large bowl, whisk the lime juice, curry powder, cumin, turmeric, and chili pepper powder. Gradually whisk in the oil. Mix in the couscous, reserved vegetables, cilantro, and parsley. Season the



mixture with salt and pepper.

Step 4. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour, until chilled. This salad can be prepared a day ahead; just reseason with lime juice, salt, and pepper before serving.

LEMON-ROSEMARY INFUSED POTATO SALAD WITH ROASTED GARLIC MAYONNAISE

Serves 4

2 pounds (1kg) potatoes — peeled and cut into large chunks
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive
8 cloves garlic — left unpeeled
1/2 teaspoon dried rosemary
2 lemons — thickly sliced
1 teaspoon salt
3 tablespoons mayonnaise

Step 1. Preheat the oven to 210°C (425°F).

Step 2. Toss the potatoes in a baking dish with the oil, garlic, rosemary, lemon and salt and bake for around 50 minutes tossing halfway through cooking.

Step 3. Remove from the oven and remove the lemon and garlic.

Step 4. Squeeze the roast garlic puree from the skins and mix into the mayonnaise until well combined.

Step 5. Add the garlic-mayo to the baking dish with the roast potatoes and mix well to combine with the baking juices.

Step 6. Serve warm or at room temperature.



MOROCCAN CHICKPEA AND COUSCOUS SALAD

Serves 2 to 4

1 cup quick-cooking couscous	1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
1/4 cup raisins	1 teaspoon salt
1 1/4 cups boiling chicken or vegetable stock	1 carrot - grated
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil	1/2 red pepper - finely diced
2 tablespoons lemon juice	1/4 red onion - finely diced
1 clove garlic - minced	1 cup canned chickpeas - rinsed and drained
1 teaspoon ground cumin	2 tablespoons chopped flat-leaf parsley
1 teaspoon ground coriander	

- Step 1.** Mix the couscous with the raisins in a bowl and pour over the boiling stock.
- Step 2.** Cover with a dish towel, plate or plastic wrap to seal in the steam and let sit for 5 minutes.
- Step 3.** Place the oil, lemon juice, garlic, spices, and salt in a jar with a screw-top lid and shake to mix.
- Step 4.** Fluff the couscous with a fork to separate the grains and stir through the carrot, red pepper, onion, chickpeas and parsley.
- Step 5.** Pour over the dressing and toss together until well combined.



THREE BEAN SALAD

Serves 10

- 1 can (14.5 - 16 ounces) cut green beans
- 1 can (14.5 - 16 ounces) cut wax (yellow) beans
- 1 can (15-16 ounces) red kidney beans
- 1 cup purple onion, sliced into thin rings
- 1/2 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt (or to taste)
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper (or to taste)



Step 1. Drain and rinse the beans. Combine the beans with the sliced onions.

Step 2. Mix together the cider vinegar, vegetable oil and sugar until the sugar is well dissolved. Add salt and pepper to taste. Pour over beans and onions and toss well.

Step 3. Refrigerate for several hours before serving.



Baked Artichokes with Panko, Black Olives and Shitake Mushrooms

4 small or 2 large
artichokes

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& V



2 tablespoons fresh squeezed lemon
juice

1 tablespoon sea salt
1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 cup Japanese panko flakes
1-2 cloves garlic (minced)

1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
8-10 black olives (diced)
2-3 tablespoons re-hydrated shiitake mushrooms (chopped)
Additional olive oil for brushing the artichokes/baking dish
Lemon wedges for serving

Step 1. First, prepare the artichokes for stuffing: Slice about an inch off the top of each artichoke and snip the sharp tips of each leaf with scissors. Pull out the woody inner leaves from the center until the fuzzy “choke” covering the heart is revealed. Remove the fuzz with a small sharp knife or spoon. Remove the stems of the artichokes, cutting them flush against the base so the artichokes are able to sit upright in a baking dish. Peel the stems with a vegetable peeler, removing the tough outer layer. (**Note:** Artichokes will brown quickly once they are cut—to prevent this, put out a large bowl of water with some lemon juice squeezed into it and keep the cut artichokes in the bowl until you have finished prepping all of them.)

Step 2. Bring a large pot of water to a boil and add the artichokes and peeled stems along with the salt and two tablespoons of lemon juice. Boil for about 30 minutes, or until the leaves are tender. While the artichokes are cooking, re-hydrate the shiitake mushrooms in a cup of warm water.

BAKED ARTICHOKES WITH PANKO, BLACK OLIVES AND SHITAKE MUSHROOMS (CONT.)

Step 3. Preheat oven to 400°F. Remove the artichokes and stems from the water and place upside down on a paper towel lined plate to drain. Chop the cooked artichoke stems and shiitake mushrooms into small pieces

(reserving a few mushroom slices for garnish). Combine the olive oil, panko flakes, minced garlic, ground pepper, diced olives, chopped mushrooms, and chopped stems in a mixing bowl. Place artichokes upright in lightly oiled baking dish. Spoon mixture into each hollowed out artichoke and brush all over with olive oil. Bake for 20 minutes. Remove from oven, garnish with reserved mushroom, and serve with lemon wedges.

BLACK BEAN AND CORN STEW

Serves 4

4 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 medium onion, chopped
4 garlic cloves, minced
2 teaspoons ground cumin
1 can (4 1/2 ounces) chopped green chiles
2 cans (15 ounces each) black beans, drained and rinsed
2 cans (14 1/2 ounces each) diced tomatoes in juice
Coarse salt
1 package (10 ounces) frozen corn

Step 1. In a large saucepan, heat oil over medium. Add onion; cook until softened, 5 to 6 minutes. Add garlic and cumin; cook, stirring often, until fragrant, about 2 minutes more.

Step 2. To the pan, add chiles, beans, tomatoes and their juice, 2 cups water, and 3/4 teaspoon salt. Bring mixture to a boil; reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer, partially covered, until slightly thickened, about 20 minutes.

Step 3. In a blender or food processor, puree 2 cups of the stew. Return the puree to the pan, and add corn; simmer until heated through, about 5 minutes. Serve hot.



CABBAGE PATCH SOUP

Serves 8 to 12

2 tablespoons butter or margarine
3 large baking potatoes, peeled and cut in 1/2-inch cubes
4 medium carrots, peeled and cut in 1/2-inch cubes
2 medium leeks, washed and cut in 1/2-inch slices
2 quarts water
1 medium cabbage, finely chopped
2 (or more) cloves garlic, minced
Salt and Pepper

Step 1. Melt butter or margarine over medium heat in a heavy 6-quart pot. Add the potatoes, carrots and leeks. Cook gently for 5 minutes, stirring the pot often.

Step 2. Add the water and bring to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer slowly, uncovered, for one hour. Add the cabbage to the pot along with the garlic. Simmer 30 minutes longer. Season to taste with salt and pepper.



CHUNKY TOMATO SOUP

3 onions, chopped
3 carrots, chopped
3 celery stalks, chopped
2 ounces extra-virgin olive oil
1 ounce butter
1 Bay Leaf
1 clove garlic, minced
Salt & Pepper to taste
1-1/2 pints vegetable stock
2 pounds tomatoes
Basil/ Tarragon

Saute onion, carrots & celery in oil and butter. Add Bay Leaf and garlic and cook a few minutes until vegetables are slightly soft. Cut tomatoes into pieces. Add to vegetables. Cover pan and cook 15 minutes. Stir frequently. When tomatoes have softened, add stock a little at a time. Cook 20 minutes. Add herbs; check seasoning.



ITALIAN FISH SOUP

1/2 pound mussels
2 carrots (chopped)
1/4 pound ripe olives
1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1-1/4 cup chopped tomatoes
1 Bay Leaf
1 onion (chopped)
2 cloves garlic (minced)
Salt & Pepper
2 pounds mixed fish
2 tablespoons chopped parsley



Step 1. Prepare mussels. Heat 2 tablespoons oil and saute onions (chopped), garlic and carrots 5 minutes. Add tomatoes, Bay Leaf, and season with salt and pepper.

Step 2. Add prepared fish; cook 5 minutes. Add mussels. Simmer 10 minutes or until shells open.

KALE SOUP (CALDO VERDE)

1/2 pound Linguica cut into 1/2- inch pieces (cook in microwave and blot)

4 large potatoes, peeled and cut into 4-inch pieces

4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

Salt and Pepper to taste

6 cups Chicken Broth

2 cups Kale, cleaned and deveined (stems and center vein removed); roll up leaves and chop very thinly

Put potatoes, salt, pepper, 4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil and chicken broth in large pot. Cover and bring to a boil, when potatoes are soft, mash in the same broth. Then add kale, Linguica and some more olive oil. Cover and cook for 30 minutes, stirring after the first 15 minutes. Serve when piping hot with French bread.



ROASTED VEGETABLE PASTA

Serves 2

4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons lemon juice
3 cloves garlic — minced
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/2 teaspoon dried chili flakes
1 tablespoon finely chopped parsley
1 bunch asparagus (or 15 green beans)
1/2 red pepper — cut into thick strips
1/2 green pepper — cut into thick strips
1/2 yellow pepper — cut into thick strips
12 button mushrooms—thickly sliced
8 oz (240g) dried fettuccine
Parmesan cheese to serve



Step 1. Preheat the oven to 450F/230C.

Step 2. Mix together the olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, salt, pepper, chili and parsley.

Step 3. Toss with the vegetables in a baking dish, and bake for 15 minutes.

Step 4. While the vegetables are roasting, bring a large pot of salted water to a boil and cook the pasta according to package directions.

Step 5. Drain the pasta, reserving 2 tablespoons of the cooking water, and toss gently with the roasted vegetables until well combined.

Step 6. Serve with a little grated Parmesan cheese.



Dinner

BAKED SCROD IN CIDER

Serves 6

1 medium onion, sliced thin
6 scrod or cod or tilapia fillets, skin removed
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
Salt & Pepper
4 slices bacon
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 cup fresh bread crumbs
2 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
Salt & Pepper
2 plum tomatoes, seeded & diced
3/4 cup apple cider
1/4 cup white wine vinegar



Step 1. Preheat oven to 350° and butter a 2-quart gratin dish or other shallow baking dish. Scatter onion evenly in dish and top with fillets in one layer. Brush fillets with mustard and season with salt and pepper.

Step 2. In a skillet, cook bacon until crisp; drain on paper towels. Reserve the drippings. Cool bacon and crumble. Pour off all but 2 tablespoons drippings and cook bread crumbs over moderate heat. In a bowl stir bread crumbs, bacon, parsley and salt and pepper. Pat crumb mixture on top of fillets. Scatter tomatoes over fish. In a measuring cup, whisk together cider and vinegar and pour around fillets. Bake, uncovered, about 30 minutes or until cooked through.

GRILLED FISH WITH ROBUST RED SAUCE AND COUSCOUS SALAD

Serves 2

For the Robust Red Sauce:

4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 red onions — diced
4 cloves garlic — finely chopped
28 oz (840g) canned tomatoes — chopped
1/2 cup red wine
1/2 teaspoon dried rosemary
1/2 teaspoon dried red chili flakes
1-1/2 teaspoons salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/2 teaspoon sugar
4 red bell peppers — deseeded and quartered

For the grilled fish and couscous salad:

4 tablespoons lemon juice
4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
2 cloves garlic — minced
2 x 6 ounces (180g) firm white fish fillets
1 cup couscous
2 small zucchini — quartered lengthways and very thinly sliced into quarters
1-1/4 cups boiling chicken or vegetable stock
1 scallion (green part only) — thinly sliced on diagonal
1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh parsley
1 teaspoon finely chopped fresh mint
2 ounces (60g) crumbled feta
1/2 portion of the Robust Red Sauce recipe — heated

To make the Robust Red Sauce:

Step 1. Heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium heat and cook the onions for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the garlic and cook for another 5 minutes, stirring regularly.

Step 2. Add the tomatoes, wine, rosemary, chili flakes, salt, pepper and sugar and bring to the boil.

Step 3. Cover, reduce the heat to medium and cook for 20 minutes.

Step 4. While the sauce simmers, place the peppers (skin side up) under a hot broiler (griller) until the skin blackens all over, about 10 minutes.

GRILLED FISH WITH ROBUST RED SAUCE AND COUSCOUS SALAD (CONT.)

Step 5. Remove and cover the charred peppers with a clean dishcloth or plastic wrap for 5 minutes to allow the steam to loosen the skins from the pepper flesh.

Step 6. Peel off the blackened skin from the peppers and roughly cut the flesh into pieces then add to the sauce.

Step 7. Place the sauce into a food processor or blender and process until smooth.

To make the grilled fish and couscous salad:

Step 1. Mix together the lemon juice, olive oil, salt, pepper and garlic in a bowl.

Step 2. Pour half the lemon/oil mixture over the fish fillets and marinate, covered, in the fridge for 1 hour.

Step 3. Combine the couscous and zucchini in a bowl, pour over the boiling stock, cover and allow to steam for 5 minutes.

Step 4. Fluff the couscous with a fork and toss with the scallion, parsley and mint.

Step 5. Drizzle over the remaining lemon/oil mixture and the crumbled feta and toss well to combine.

Step 6. Set the couscous salad aside while the fish continues to marinate.



Step 7. Heat a cast iron grill pan over a high heat until very hot.

Step 8. Cook the fish fillets in the pan for around 3 minutes each side until just cooked.

Step 9. Serve each fillet on a bed of the couscous salad and spoon the heated robust red sauce over the top.

Variations: Grill chicken breast fillets instead of fish. Serve any leftover couscous salad tossed with strips of smoked salmon and cubed avocado (drizzled with lemon juice to prevent browning).

Italian Grilled Sea Bass

4 6-ounce sea bass fillets
2 teaspoons chili powder
1 tablespoon ground paprika
1 clove garlic minced
1/4 cup fresh cilantro, minced
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
1 teaspoon salt

Mix together chili powder, paprika, garlic, cilantro, pepper and salt in a plastic bag, then pour the contents onto a plate. Place each sea bass fillet onto the plate to cover with the mixture. Place sea bass on a grill and grill until cooked through.



MOROCCAN CHICKEN KEBOBS

Serves 6 to 8

Dry Rub:

1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon cumin
1/2 teaspoon turmeric
1/4 teaspoon cayenne (optional)
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1/4 teaspoon cardamom
1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
2 teaspoons brown sugar

For the Kebobs:

2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken breasts
2 small red onions, peeled and cut into 1-inch-wide sections
2 bell peppers, cleaned and cut into 1-inch squares
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
Salt and pepper
12 (10-inch) bamboo skewers, soaked in water for 30 minutes

Step 1. In a small bowl, combine the dry rub ingredients and mix well.

Step 2. Cut the meat into 1 1/2-inch cubes and put them in a gallon-size zip-lock bag with the rub mix. Seal the bag and shake it vigorously until all the chicken is well coated.

Step 3. Place the onions and peppers in a gallon-size zip-lock bag, add the olive oil, and season with salt and pepper. Seal the bag and shake it vigorously to coat the vegetables well.

Step 4. Assemble the kebobs by alternately skewering pieces of chicken, onions, and peppers.



- Step 5.** Prepare a charcoal fire or set a gas grill to medium-high, close the lid, and heat until hot -- about 10 to 15 minutes.
- Step 6.** Grill the kebobs, turning occasionally, until the chicken is no longer pink inside, about 8 to 10 minutes on a gas grill.

PENNE RIGATE ALLA RICOTTA E NOCI

200g (7 ounces) of penne rigate, or your pasta of choice

150g (5 ounces) of ricotta

30g (1 ounce) of chopped walnuts

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil

- Step 1.** Cook the pasta in lightly salted water according to instructions on the package
- Step 2.** When the penne are done, drain, and immediately put them back in the same empty pan
- Step 3.** Add the ricotta and the olive oil and mix them gently
- Step 4.** Add the walnuts
- Step 5.** Optionally, if you like a stronger taste, you can add a some strong cheese, like a small piece of gorgonzola or ground pecorino or parmesan.



ROASTED GARLIC, PUMPKIN AND RED PEPPER RISOTTO WITH SPINACH AND CHIKPEAS

2 cups peeled and cubed pumpkin or winter squash (cut into 1/2-inch cubes)
1 red pepper — deseeded and cut into quarters
6 cloves garlic — left unpeeled
4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
1/2 teaspoon dried rosemary
1 onion — finely chopped
1 cup arborio rice
2 cups vegetable or chicken stock

1/2 cup white wine
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
10 kalamata olives — pitted and quartered
2 packed cups roughly chopped fresh spinach
1 cup canned chickpeas — rinsed well and drained
1/3 cup finely grated parmesan cheese
1 tablespoon lemon juice

- Step 1.** Preheat an oven to 450F/230C. Place the pumpkin, red pepper and garlic cloves in a baking dish and toss with 1 tablespoon of the oil, the balsamic vinegar and rosemary until well coated. Bake for 20 minutes.
- Step 2.** While the vegetables cook, heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a large saucepan and cook the onion for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. ADD the rice, stir to coat the grains in oil and cook for 1 minute. Add the wine, stock, salt, black pepper, olives and spinach, stir to combine and bring to a boil. Cover with a lid, reduce the heat to low and cook for 20 minutes without lifting the lid.
- Step 3.** Remove the red pepper and garlic from the baking dish. Add the



chickpeas to the baking dish with the pumpkin and return to the oven for 5 minutes. Roughly chop the peppers.

Step 4. Squeeze the garlic pulp from the skins and stir into the risotto with the parmesan, lemon juice and remaining tablespoon of oil. Stir in the red pepper, pumpkin and chickpeas to combine.

SAMLON RISOTTO WITH DILL AND LEMON

Serves 2

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 onion - finely chopped
2 cloves garlic - finely chopped
1 teaspoon finely chopped lemon zest
1 zucchini (courgette) - sliced into rounds
1 cup arborio rice
1/2 cup white wine
2 cups vegetable or chicken stock
1 tablespoon roughly chopped fresh dill
1 teaspoon sea salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/3 cup frozen green peas-thawed
7 ounces (210g) canned Alaskan red salmon - bones and skin removed and broken into chunks
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1/3 cup finely grated Parmesan cheese



Step 1. Heat 2 tablespoons of the olive oil in a large saucepan over a medium heat and cook the onion for 5 minutes. Add the garlic, lemon zest and zucchini and cook for another 3 minutes. Add the rice and cook for a minute, stirring to coat the rice grains with oil.

Step 2. Pour in the wine and stock, add the dill, salt and pepper and bring to the boil. Cover with a lid, reduce the

heat to low and cook for 18 minutes.

Step 3. Add the peas and salmon on top and cook, covered, for another 2 minutes. Stir in the reserved tablespoon of olive oil, the lemon juice and cheese and mix until well combined.

SICILIAN SWORDFISH

Serves 4

2 ounces raisins
3 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil
2/3 small onion, minced
2/3 clove garlic, minced
5 ounces ripe tomatoes, diced
6-7 green olives, pitted and minced
1 1/2 ounces pine nuts
2 tablespoons and 2 teaspoons capers
1 1/4 pounds Swordfish steaks
Salt and pepper to taste



- Step 1.** Soak the raisins in lukewarm water for thirty minutes. Drain. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
- Step 2.** Heat the olive oil in a saucepan over high heat and saute onion and garlic until soft. Stir in the raisins, tomatoes, olives, pine nuts and capers. Cover, reduce heat to medium and cook 15 minutes.
- Step 3.** Season the swordfish with salt and pepper. Place in lightly oiled baking dish and cover with cooked sauce. Bake for 15 - 20 minutes or until steaks are firm.

SPINACH AND RICOTTA LASAGNA

Serves 4

For the Spinach and Ricotta

Pâté:

1/2 Onion

300g (10 ounces) of fresh spinach

4 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil

2 cloves of garlic

300g (10 ounces) ricotta

For the Lasagna:

Sheets of pasta for lasagna

Spinach and ricotta pâté

300ml (7 fl ounces) of milk

100g (3.5 ounces) of grated Parmesan

1 tablespoon of flour

A hint of nutmeg

For the Spinach and Ricotta Pâté:

Step 1. Wash the spinach leaves and dry well; finely chop the onion and smash the garlic.

Step 2. Put the olive oil in a pan on low heat and add the onion and garlic. Cook until the garlic and onion are slightly golden, stirring occasionally.

Step 3. Add the spinach leaves, stir well, cover with a lid and cook in low heat until the leaves are tender, stirring occasionally.

Step 4. Remove from heat and wait until the spinach mix reaches room temperature, then pass it through a food processor until thoroughly mixed. Still in the food processor, add the ricotta and mix until creamy.

For the Bechamel Sauce:



Step 1. Dissolve the flour in the cold milk. Add the nutmeg.

Step 2. Cook over a low heat, mixing gently until it starts to thicken. Remove from heat immediately.

SPINACH AND RICOTTA LASAGNA (CONT.)

For the Lasagna:

Step 1. Spread a thin layer of the sauce on the bottom of the tray. Spread the Spinach and Ricotta pâté on a layer of lasagna. Position the layer on the tray, over the sauce. Add a thin layer of the bechamel sauce.

Step 2. Repeat the process until you're done with the layers.

Step 3. Cover generously with the sauce and make sure also the sides are covered.

Step 4. Spread the grated cheese over the top and cook in a preheated oven at 200°C (390°F) for about 25 minutes.

SWEET MOROCCAN COUSCOUS WITH RASINS, ALMONDS AND ARGAN OIL

Serves 6 to 8

3 tablespoons toasted argan oil
1 cup slivered almonds
1 cup golden raisins
Juice and grated zest of 1 lemon
2 teaspoons cinnamon
Pinch of salt
1 1/2 cups instant couscous
1 1/4 cups plain yogurt
1/2 cup plus 1 1/2 tablespoons honey



- Step 1.** Place 1/2 tablespoon argan oil in skillet over medium heat. Add almonds, and cook, stirring, until almonds turn golden. Transfer to bowl. Add raisins, lemon zest and cinnamon to bowl, and mix well.
- Step 2.** Bring 1 1/2 cups water with pinch of salt and 1 1/2 tablespoons argan oil to boil in heavy saucepan. Stir in couscous, cover and remove from heat. Allow to sit 7 minutes to absorb liquid. Fluff with fork, and transfer to large bowl, mixing with fork or fingertips to break up any lumps. Reserve 1/3 cup of almond and raisin mixture and fold rest in with couscous.
- Step 3.** Beat 2/3 cup yogurt with 1/2 cup honey until smooth. Add lemon juice. Pour over couscous mixture, and fold in until grains are evenly moistened.
- Step 4.** Coat 5-to-6-cup bowl or mold with 1/2 tablespoon argan oil. Pack couscous mixture into mold, and smooth top. Set aside at room temperature until ready to serve.

Step 5. To serve, beat remaining yogurt with remaining honey and 1/2 tablespoon argan oil. Unmold couscous onto serving dish. Top with reserved raisins and almonds. Serve with yogurt and honey sauce on the side.

TOMATO, BASIL AND ASIAGO FRITTATA

6 large eggs
1 cup milk
Pinch of sea salt
1 cup fresh tomato, chopped and with seeds removed
1/4 cup chopped fresh basil (about 10-12 leaves)
1/4 cup shredded asiago cheese
Extra-virgin olive oil for the baking dish

Preheat oven to 350°F (177°C). Lightly oil an 8-inch baking dish with olive oil. Beat the eggs, milk and sea salt in a large bowl, then stir in chopped tomato, chopped basil and shredded asiago. Pour into oiled baking dish and bake for 30-35 minutes or until firm. Allow to cool for 5 minutes, then cut into wedges and serve.





Sweets

APRICOT-THYME GALETTE

6 1/5 ounces all-purpose flour, divided	1/4 cup chilled butter, cut into pieces
3 tablespoons ice water	1 1/2 tablespoons cornstarch
1/2 teaspoon cider vinegar	2 pounds firm ripe apricots, pitted and cut into quarters
1/8 teaspoon almond extract	1/4 cup apricot jam
1/3 cup turbinado sugar, divided	1 tablespoon honey
1/4 cup almond flour	1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves
1/4 teaspoon salt	

Step 1. Preheat oven to 400°.

Step 2. Lightly spoon 1.1 ounces (about 1/4 cup) all-purpose flour into a dry measuring cup; level with a knife. Combine 1.1 ounces all-purpose flour, ice water, vinegar, and almond extract in a small bowl; stir with a fork until well blended to form a slurry.

Step 3. Combine remaining 5.1 ounces (about 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons) all-purpose flour, 2 tablespoons sugar, almond flour, and salt, stirring with a whisk. Cut in butter with a pastry blender or 2 knives until mixture resembles coarse meal. Add slurry; stir just until moist. Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface; knead lightly 5 times. Gently press dough into a 4-inch circle on heavy-duty plastic wrap. Cover with additional plastic wrap. Carefully roll dough into a 14-inch circle; freeze for 10 minutes.

Step 4. Remove dough from freezer; remove top sheet of plastic wrap. Let stand 1 minute or until pliable. Place dough, plastic wrap side up, onto a baking sheet lined with parchment paper; remove remaining plastic wrap.

Step 5. Combine cornstarch and 2 tablespoons sugar; sprinkle over dough, leaving a 2-inch border. Arrange apricots spokelike on top of cornstarch mixture, leaving a 2-inch border. Fold edges of dough over apricots (dough will only



partially cover apricots).

Step 6. Combine jam and honey in a small microwave-safe bowl; microwave on HIGH 45 seconds. Brush jam mixture over apricots and dough edges. Sprinkle with remaining sugar. Bake at 400° for 35 minutes or until crust browns. Remove from oven; sprinkle with thyme. Cool 10 minutes.

BITTERSWEET CHOCOLATE-CHERRY SORBET

For the sorbet:

3/4 cup red cherry jam (such as Bonne Maman)
1/2 cup Dutch process cocoa
1/4 cup sugar
1/8 teaspoon salt
2 cups water

For the compote:

1/4 cup sugar
1 pound fresh Bing or tart cherries, pitted and halved

- Step 1.** To prepare sorbet, combine first 4 ingredients in a heavy saucepan, stirring with a whisk. Gradually add 2 cups water, stirring with a whisk. Bring mixture to a boil, stirring well with a whisk. Cool to room temperature; cover and chill overnight.
- Step 2.** Stir sorbet mixture with a whisk. Pour mixture into the freezer can of an ice-cream freezer; freeze according to manufacturer's instructions. Spoon sorbet into a freezer-safe container; cover and freeze 1 hour or until firm.
- Step 3.** To prepare compote, combine 1/4 cup sugar and cherries; toss well. Let stand at room temperature 1 hour. Serve compote with sorbet.



PEACH, PLUM, AND APRICOT CRISP

4 1/2 cups sliced peaches
2 cups sliced plums
2 cups sliced apricots
3/4 cup granulated sugar
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1/4 teaspoon grated whole nutmeg
Cooking spray
1 cup old-fashioned rolled oats
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
3 2/5 ounces all-purpose flour (about 3/4 cup)
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup butter, melted
4 cups vanilla low-fat ice cream



Step 1. Combine first 6 ingredients in a large bowl; let stand 15 minutes.

Step 2. Preheat oven to 400°.

Step 3. Spoon fruit mixture into a 13 x 9-inch glass or ceramic baking dish coated with cooking spray. Bake at 400° for 35 minutes or until bubbly.

Step 4. Combine oats and next 3 ingredients (through salt) in a bowl. Drizzle with butter, stirring until crumbly. Sprinkle oat mixture over fruit. Bake an additional 15 minutes or until topping is lightly browned and fruit is bubbly. Serve warm with ice cream.

PEACHES WITH CAVA AND LEMON VERBANA

10 (3-inch) lemon verbena leaves
1 (750-milliliter) bottle Cava or other sparkling wine
1/2 cup sugar
6 cups sliced peaches (about 2 pounds)
1/2 teaspoon minced lemon verbena leaves

Combine whole verbena leaves and sparkling wine in a large saucepan; bring to a boil over medium heat. Cook until reduced to 1 cup (about 15 minutes). Remove and discard the whole leaves. Add sugar, stirring until dissolved. Add sliced peaches; bring to a boil. Remove from heat. Cover and chill. Stir in minced verbena leaves just before serving.



SEARED FIGS AND WHITE PEACHES WITH BALSAMIC REDUCTION

1 teaspoon black peppercorns
2 teaspoons butter, divided
2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme, divided
4 firm ripe white peaches (about 1 3/4 pounds), halved and pitted
8 firm ripe Black Mission figs, halved lengthwise (about 1 pound)
1/3 cup balsamic vinegar
1/3 cup crème fraîche
1/8 teaspoon salt

Step 1. Cook peppercorns in a small skillet over medium heat 6 minutes or until fragrant and toasted. Cool. Place peppercorns in a heavy-duty zip-top plastic bag; seal. Crush peppercorns with a meat mallet or rolling pin; set aside.

Step 2. Melt 1 teaspoon butter in a large skillet over medium-high heat; stir in 1 teaspoon thyme. Add peaches, cut sides down, to pan. Cook 2 minutes or until browned. Remove from pan. Place 1 peach half, cut sides up, on each of 8 plates. Melt remaining 1 teaspoon butter in pan; stir in remaining 1 teaspoon thyme. Add figs, cut sides down, to pan; cook 2 minutes or until browned. Place two fig halves on each plate.

Step 3. Add vinegar to pan; cook over medium-low heat until reduced to 3 tablespoons (about 3 minutes). Cool slightly. Spoon about 2 teaspoons crème fraîche into the center of each peach half; drizzle about 1 teaspoon vinegar mixture over each serving. Sprinkle each serving with about 1/8 teaspoon pepper. Sprinkle evenly with salt.



WATERMELON-JALAPENO ICE POPS

3 cups fresh red or yellow watermelon cubes, chilled
1/2 cup sugar
1/4 cup fresh lime juice
1 tablespoon light-colored corn syrup
1 tablespoon liquid pectin
1 large jalapeño pepper, halved and seeded
2 teaspoons grated lime rind

Combine the first 6 ingredients in a blender, and process until pureed. Stir in lime rind. Pour into 8 (3-ounce) ice pop molds. Freeze 6 hours or until firm.

