

## **SIMPLE FAMILY RECIPIES**

### **Ideas for evening meals**

#### **Easy Chicken Fajitas**

- 2 large chicken breasts, finely sliced
- 1 red onion, finely sliced
- 1 red pepper, sliced
- 1 red chilli, finely sliced (optional)

#### **For the marinade**

- 1 heaped tbsp smoked paprika
- 1 tbsp ground coriander
- pinch of ground cumin
- 2 medium garlic cloves, crushed
- 4 tbsp olive oil
- 1 lime, juiced
- 4-5 drops Tabasco

#### **To serve**

- 6 medium tortillas
- bag mixed salad
- 230g tub fresh salsa

#### **Method**

Mix 1 heaped tbsp smoked paprika, 1 tbsp ground coriander, a pinch of ground cumin, 2 crushed garlic cloves, 4 tbsp olive oil, the juice of 1 lime and 4-5 drops Tabasco together in a bowl with a big pinch each of salt and pepper.

#### **• STEP 3**

Stir 2 finely sliced chicken breasts, 1 finely sliced red onion, 1 sliced red pepper and 1 finely sliced red chilli, if using, into the marinade.

#### **• STEP 4**

Heat a griddle pan until smoking hot and add the chicken and marinade to the pan.

#### **• STEP 5**

Keep everything moving over a high heat for about 5 mins using tongs until you get a nice charred effect. If your griddle pan is small you may need to do this in two batches.

- **STEP 6**

To check the chicken is cooked, find the thickest part and tear in half – if any part is still raw cook until done.

- **STEP 7**

Put the tortillas in the oven to heat up and serve with the cooked chicken, a bag of mixed salad and one 230g tub of fresh salsa.

### Easy Dahl

- 400g/14oz red lentils, rinsed in a sieve under cold running water
- 2 tsp ground turmeric
- 25g/1oz butter
- 2 tsp cumin seeds
- 3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1-2 green chillies, finely chopped, to taste
- salt and pepper
- 200g/7oz rice, cooked according to the packet instructions

Place the lentils into a saucepan and cover with enough water to come 3cm/1¼in above the lentils. Bring to a boil, skimming off any froth as you bring it to the boil. Once simmering, add the turmeric along with half of the butter. Simmer gently for 20 minutes, or until the lentils are completely softened and the water is absorbed, but the mixture not dry.

Meanwhile, heat a small frying pan over a medium heat. Add the cumin seeds and dry fry until toasted and aromatic (about 1-2 minutes). Remove the cumin seeds from the pan and set to one side. Add the remaining butter to the pan and, once melted, fry the garlic and chopped green chilli for 1-2 minutes, or until the garlic turns light golden-brown, and the chilli is softened. Add the toasted cumin seeds back to the pan and remove from the heat.

Once the lentils are soft, give them a rigorous stir to break them up a little. Stir the chilli and garlic mixture (including any butter) into the pan with the lentils and mix well. Taste and adjust the seasoning as necessary.

Serve with rice and raw spinach.

### Spinach, chickpea and cashew nut korma

- 1 medium onion
- 1 tablespoon of korma curry paste
- 200ml coconut milk
- 1 410g tin chickpeas, drained and liquid reserved
- 200g washed and ready to use spinach

- 90g plain cashew nuts

Place the onion in a large, deep, non-stick frying pan with the liquid from the chickpeas and bring to the boil, Lower the heat, cover and simmer for 5 minutes.

Remove the lid and gently cook for 2-3 minutes or until all the water has evaporated.

Add the curry paste and cook for 2-3 minutes more.

Stir in the coconut milk and bring to a simmer.

Add the chickpeas, spinach and cashew nuts and simmer for 5-10 minutes, uncovered, to heat through, wilt the spinach, combine all the flavour and thicken the sauce.

Serve with rice.

### Quick and easy meatballs

- 400g chicken or turkey mince
- Finely chopped red onion
- 1 tablespoon soya sauce
- 1 tablespoon Thai chilli dipping sauce

Mix everything together and form into burger or meatball sizes. If the mixture is too sticky you can add some flour. Pan fry in olive oil. *I sometimes panfry first then transfer to oven to keep warm.*

Lovely with Pitta bread and salad or homemade potato wedges.

### Easy Tomato Garlic Pasta

- 1 tin of chopped tomatoes or plum tomatoes
- 1 teaspoon of olive oil
- 1 garlic clove
- Balsamic Vinegar or Red Wine Vinegar
- 1 teaspoon of soft brown sugar or coconut palm sugar
- 1 pinch of sea salt (Maldon is best) and ground black pepper to taste
- ¼ to ½ teaspoon (depending on taste) of mixed herbs or dried oregano
- Dried spaghetti or pasta to serve (preferably wholemeal)

Heat the olive oil in a saucepan and add the crushed clove of garlic along with the salt. Once the garlic starts to sizzle after about 10 seconds (don't allow to turn brown as it will taste bitter) add the tinned tomatoes.

Stir well then add a slug of balsamic vinegar or about a teaspoon if unsure. Then add the sugar and mixed herbs or oregano. Finally add the pepper.

Put your pasta on to boil and leave the tomato sauce to simmer for about 10 minutes. When the pasta is cooked the sauce should be ready too.

If using plum tomatoes just mash the tomatoes down so there are no big chunks.

You can either mix the sauce into the pasta or lay it on top. Serve with a fresh green salad and grated cheese for added protein.

### Easy Vegetable Katsu Curry

- Katsu curry paste (usually near the salt and pepper)
- 1 large white onion finely chopped
- 1 large clove of garlic (crushed)
- 1 pepper either red or orange
- 1 sweet potato (de-skinned and cut into cubes)
- 1 red skinned white potato (de-skinned and cut into cubes)
- Handful of frozen peas
- 1 tin of coconut milk
- Free range egg noodles
- Glug of olive oil

Heat the olive oil in a large heavy bottomed pan and add the onion chopped along with a pinch of sea salt (preferably Maldon salt) to prevent it sticking. Fry until softened (if the onion starts to stick add a small amount of water).

Then add the potatoes (rinse the white potato after peeling it and before chopping into cubes to remove the excess starch). Add a small amount of water (1 tablespoon) with the potatoes and cook for a further 10 mins.

Then add the chopped pepper and frozen peas and garlic and cook for a further five mins.

Add a tablespoon of the Katsu paste and stir in well and cook for a couple of minutes then add the whole tin of coconut milk. Stir well and simmer until the potatoes are fully softened.

Serve with the noodles.

### Naan Bread Pizzas

- Shop Bought Naan bread (4 for a family of 4)
- Tomato puree/tomato pulp
- Mozzarella cheese – grated or chopped up
- Topping of your choice: mushrooms/pepperoni/ham
- Mixed Italian herbs
- Olive oil

Preheat the oven to 220°C/200°C Fan/gas mark 7/425°F. Lay the naan on a lined baking sheet.

Spread the tomato pulp/puree or sauce over the naan, then put your toppings on top and sprinkle with the chopped cheese. Sprinkle the herbs on the topping. Drizzle with olive oil before cooking.

Cook in the oven for about 5 minutes, by which time the cheese should be bubbling and melted. Be careful not to burn your mouth.

### Creamy garlic chicken (Pinch of Nom recipe)

- 400 g chicken breast or thigh thinly sliced
  - 1 onion thinly sliced
  - 175 g light cream cheese
  - 3 cloves garlic thinly sliced or crushed
  - 250 g button mushrooms thinly sliced
  - 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
  - 1 tsp white wine vinegar
  - 1 tsp Dijon mustard
  - 400 ml meat stock made with 1 chicken stock pot and 1 beef stock pot
  - salt and freshly ground black pepper
  - fresh chives chopped, to serve
  - paprika to serve
  - low calorie cooking spray
1. Season the chicken with a little sea salt and freshly ground black pepper, then set aside
  2. Spray a large frying pan with low calorie cooking spray and place on a medium heat
  3. Add the chicken to the pan and quickly seal on all sides, then remove the meat from the pan, and set aside
  4. Return the pan to the medium heat. Add the vinegar to the Worcestershire sauce and deglaze the pan with the mixture, scraping and stirring the browned bits from the pan - use some of the stock if you need to. When most of the liquid has evaporated spray the pan with some low-calorie cooking spray. Add the onion, mushrooms and garlic and sauté for 5 minutes until they start to brown, then add the Dijon mustard and cook for a minute or two, stirring
  5. Add the stock to the pan and simmer until the liquid has reduced by half
  6. Reduce the heat to low and stir in the cream cheese, making sure there are no lumps of cheese remaining
  7. Return the chicken to the pan, stir well and simmer for 5-10 minutes until the chicken is cooked. If the sauce looks a little thick you can add some more water until it reaches the consistency you prefer

8. Sprinkle with the chopped chives and paprika, if desired
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## Lunches

### Easy toasted wraps

- Wraps (we like Morrison's white and more)
- Mozzarella slices (we like Morrison's Mozzarella slices)
- Ham

Open the wrap and put a small amount of butter/margarine along the far-right side.

Put the Mozzarella slice and then ham on the left side.

Fold the non-filled side over and press with your thumb to seal the wrap. You should have a media half-moon shape.

Put into a non-stick pan on a medium heat and cook for around 5 minutes each side.

Serve with a salad or soup.

You can do any version of this. Try:

- Mozzarella and Mushrooms
- Cheese and Chilli Jam

### Easy Pea Soup

- 1 small onion or 2 shallots
- Olive oil
- 1 pack of Frozen petit pois
- 200 ml Vegetable stock
- Crème fraiche

1. Chop the onion/shallots finely
2. Heat the olive oil in a pan.
3. Add the onion/shallots and fry until soft.
4. Add the peas.
5. Add the stock and simmer for 15 minutes.
6. Add more stock if there is not enough liquid.  
Remove from the heat. Liquidise and add a tablespoon of Crème fraiche.
7. Serve with warm ciabatta bread.

### Tips

Think ahead. For example, make the easy chicken casserole and then use the leftovers to make a pie for a mid-week meal.

### **RECIPIES FOR BATCH COOKING**

#### Emma's Slow Cook Chicken Casserole

- 4 large chicken breasts
- 2 shallots, finely sliced
- 2 carrots
- ½ butternut squash chopped
- Pack of baby sweetcorn
- ½ pint chicken stock
- ½ teaspoon tarragon
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Crème fraiche

Put all the ingredients into a slow cooker, cover and leave for at least 6 hours.

An hour before servicing, stir in the crème fraiche. Season to taste.

Serve with Rice or homemade potatoes wedges/mash potatoes.

Use left overs to make a pie by adding mash potato or pastry.

#### **Batch-Cook Ragu**

- 1tsp Olive oil
- 1 onion finely chopped
- 1 carrot finely chopped
- 1 celery stick finely chopped
- 1 courgette finely chopped
- 400g low fat turkey mince
- 2 chopped garlic cloves
- 400g tin of chopped tomatoes
- 400g tin of 3 bean salad (undrained)
- 250ml chicken stock
- Mixed herbs, Salt & Pepper

Heat the olive oil in a large, non-stick pan over a medium heat.

Add the onion, carrot and celery stick and 2 tbsp water – fry for 5 minutes.

Add the courgette and fry for another 5 minutes.

Add the turkey mince and the garlic cloves and fry for 3-4 minutes, until the mince is cooked through.

Add the tomatoes and the 3-bean salad.

Add the chicken stock and herbs/seasoning.

Cover, reduce the heat and simmer for 30 minutes.

Uncover and cook for 25-30 minutes or until reduced and thickened.

### **3 WAYS WITH RAGU**

#### **1. Meat feast frying pan pizza**

Preheat the grill to medium.

Make up a 145g pizza base mix and roll out to around a 23cm diameter circle.

Put a large overproof frying pan over a medium heat and add the dough.

Cook for 4-5 minutes until the bottom is golden, flip over and cook for 1 minute.

Flip over again and spoon over 250g of the ragu.

Top with Mozzarella and finely sliced red onion and chilli.

Grill for 2-3 minutes until cooked.

#### **2. Keema Curry**

Simply stir in garam masala and ground turmeric to taste and blanched frozen peas. Reheat the ragu and top with coriander and service with rice, poppadom's and yoghurt.

#### **3. Stuffed Peppers**

Halve and deseed red peppers. Put in a greased baking dish and fill with the ragu. Top with crumbled feta and parsley. Bake until tender.

### **Good Resources**

[BBC Good Food | Recipes and cooking tips - BBC Good Food](#)

[The Best Slimming Recipes - Slimming & Weight Watchers Friendly \(pinchofnom.com\)](#)

[Quick & Easy Recipes | Speedy Suppers | Annabel Karmel](#)