

## PRE-BREAKFAST MISO SOUP

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This flavorful pre-meal soup is my standard, and its flavor can be altered with many tasty additions, including tofu, scallions and other onions, vegetables, and a wide variety of mushrooms. A small amount of vinegar establishes a strong second-meal effect and intensifies the flavor, without the high salt content of traditional miso soup. Miso can be difficult to find, and dashi is even tougher. One teaspoon of soy sauce can substitute for miso in a pinch, and try replacing the dashi with water and 1 tablespoon of brine from a jar of pickled herring, plus one or two small herring pieces.

### SERVINGS: 1

- 1 cup dashi or kombu dashi (see recipes on pp. 179 and 178) or water
- 1 teaspoon vinegar
- ½ to 1 tablespoon miso paste (depending on salt content and flavor desired)

1. Pour the dashi, kombu dashi, or water and the vinegar in a saucepan and heat on high until about to boil. Then reduce heat and simmer on medium low. Add the miso and stir vigorously until all the miso is dissolved. This can also be prepared in a microwave oven.
2. Serve in a mug or bowl with a soup spoon.

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**OPTIONAL:** Try replacing the dashi with water and 1 tablespoon brine from a jar of pickled herring, plus one or two herring pieces. As you stir the miso into the boiling water, the herring will disintegrate, making a rich herring broth. Try adding tofu; shiitake, shimeji, or enoki mushrooms; and scallions or chives, or a bit of sardine or anchovy. Stir in some green tea flakes for a healthful and simple pre-breakfast combo soup and tea.

## BREAKFAST

**T**HE RECIPES IN THIS SECTION WILL APPEAL TO WESTERN palates, but they can be eaten at any meal of the day. Likewise, any of the recipes in the other sections can be eaten for breakfast. For example, try the Okinawan egg and tofu-based stir-fry (chanpuru) dishes.

Even though most of these breakfast recipes are quick to make, try to eat them slowly or in stages so that you don't overeat, and always precede them with a pre-breakfast. As with all meals, drink green or black tea or regular or decaffeinated coffee with your meal. As discussed in chapter 11, feel free to use milk or other lactose-containing dairy in your tea or coffee—but only if a genetic test confirms that you are unable to digest lactose. If you are able to digest it, find a lactose-free alternative like heavy cream, or coconut or soy creamer.

## COSTA RICAN GALLO PINTO

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Gallo pinto can be made in large batches (lasting a few days), which can be stored in the refrigerator, reheated as needed, and eaten at any meal. Costa Ricans have a special salsa, Salsa Lizano, that they put on their gallo pinto, but Blue Zones author Dan Buettner writes that even to Costa Ricans, Worcestershire sauce is an acceptable substitute. For a tasty East meets West variant, use soy sauce instead of salt.

### SERVINGS: 1

1 teaspoon olive or canola oil  
½ cup water  
½ to ⅔ cup beans (black, pinto, kidney, etc.)  
1 teaspoon vinegar  
¼ teaspoon cumin  
Black pepper to taste  
1 small garlic clove, minced (optional)  
1 to 1½ cups precooked rice  
Squeeze of lime juice  
Salt or soy sauce to taste

In a medium saucepan, cook for 5 minutes on medium heat the oil, water, beans, vinegar, cumin, pepper, and garlic, if desired. Reduce the heat to low, add the rice, and heat until very warm but not boiling (to preserve the resistant starch content of the rice). Season with lime juice, salt or soy sauce, and pepper.

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**OPTIONAL:** Top with salsa, hot sauce, avocado slices, and/or a bit of sour cream. Try adding ⅓ cup diced cooked vegetables (onion, bell pepper, zucchini, etc.). Also try topping with freshly chopped cilantro.

## QUICK BARLEY AND RICE

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Like rice, barley is incredibly versatile and great at any meal, including breakfast. They work well together, too—the result being a dish with more Asian flair.

### SERVINGS: 1

- 1/3 cup quick-cook pearled barley
- 1 to 3 teaspoons vinegar
- 2 teaspoons sugar (optional)
- 2/3 cup precooked rice
- Salt to taste

Place barley into a 2-cup measuring cup and rinse a few minutes with several changes of water. Add water to the barley, up to the 1¼-cup level. Add vinegar, and sugar, if desired. Pour the water and barley into a small saucepan, stir, and cook for 10 to 12 minutes over medium heat. Mix the cooked barley with the precooked rice and heat for an additional minute. Cover and remove from heat, then let stand 3 minutes. Season with salt.

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**OPTIONAL:** For a rich custardy flavor, try stirring an egg into the barley and water prior to cooking.

## X FACTOR OATMEAL AND RICE

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I love oatmeal for breakfast, especially a hot bowl of it on a cold day. It also happens to be a favorite breakfast of Seventh-day Adventists, members of the Mindspan Elite by way of *National Geographic's* Blue Zone status. But remember, don't eat a serving more than two to three times a week. Use low glycemic index old-fashioned oats and *never* use presweetened and iron-enriched single-serving packages of oatmeal! This recipe can be prepared in the microwave, but beware of boilover. This recipe contains a small amount of vinegar in the cooking water. Putting it into the water allows the vinegar to penetrate the oat grain, reducing the tart flavor. A little sugar nicely counters the tartness of the vinegar, creating a mild sweet-and-sour flavor.

### SERVINGS: 1

$\frac{2}{3}$  cup water  
1 to 2 teaspoons vinegar  
2 teaspoons sugar (optional)  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup old-fashioned oatmeal  
1 cup precooked rice  
Salt to taste

Add water, vinegar, sugar if desired, and oatmeal to a small saucepan, mix, and cook for 5 minutes on medium heat. Stir in the rice and continue heating. Cover, remove from heat, and let stand 3 minutes. Season with salt.

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**OPTIONAL:** For a rich custardy flavor, try stirring an egg into the oatmeal and water prior to cooking. Try adding some cinnamon, apple, peach, or other fruit. If you feel like getting experimental with some prebiotics to fuel X factor production by your microbiome, stir in a bit of inulin or fructooligosaccharides. Try starting off with a small amount of inulin, or 1 tablespoon of liquid from a can of beans. The thick liquid in a salt-free can of beans is rich in fuel for your microbiome.

## EGG CONGEE (RICE PORRIDGE)

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Congee is a staple across Southeast Asia, commonly eaten by both mainland Japanese and Okinawans. Without the egg, the glycemic index can be too high, but cooking with the egg and vinegar brings the GI down into the acceptable range. Most people find that 1 teaspoon of vinegar adds no discernible flavor, so start with 1 teaspoon and then try increasing to 2 teaspoons. For a vegan option, instead of the egg you can use an equivalent amount or more of tofu, broken into small pieces. For maximum X factor impact, try the optional prebiotics (see below).

### SERVINGS: 1

- $\frac{2}{3}$  cup water
- 1 teaspoon canola oil
- 1 cup precooked rice
- 1 large egg, beaten, or about 3 ounces tofu,  
preferably silken
- 1 to 2 teaspoons vinegar

1. Add water, oil, rice, egg or tofu, and vinegar to a medium saucepan over medium heat, and mix well. Turn the heat to low, cover, and cook for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. (If you are in a hurry, you can pulverize some of the rice with a fork, reducing the time it takes to get a porridge.) Use less water if you want a thicker porridge or more water for a thinner porridge, but too much water or overcooking will raise the GI unacceptably.
2. This congee is great as a savory or sweet dish. I prefer it savory, and eat it with a bit of salt and black pepper.

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**OPTIONAL:** For variety in flavor and texture, and to mix a bit of Mediterranean with Asian for breakfast, you can mix your rice porridge with a bit of coarse semolina (farina) and sufficient water to hydrate it. Add  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup of fresh berries or fruit cut into  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch cubes. Try chunks of apple, peach, nectarine, plum, or apricot. Frozen berries also work well. Also feel free to top with some walnut,

pecan, or other nut pieces. If you feel like getting experimental, try the prebiotic option described on page 153. Also feel free to stir in a teaspoon of psyllium husk and about 2 tablespoons of water. Any of these options will be beneficial for your microbiome and your X factors.

## PUM-CRAN TOAST

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Lightly toast a thick slice of pumpkin semolina bread (see recipe on p. 235) or high-quality organic sourdough bread from a local bakery, and drizzle with extra virgin olive oil.

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**OPTION FOR VEGANS:** Spread with high-quality fruit jam or preserves.

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**OPTION FOR NONVEGANS:** Spread with small amount of butter and high-quality fruit jam or preserves. Or add 1 scrambled or poached egg or a slice of cheese to your toast.



## VEGGIE OMELET

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**SERVINGS: 1**

- 1/3 cup diced vegetables (bell pepper, zucchini, or both)
- 2 tablespoons diced onion
- 5 medium fresh white or brown mushrooms, sliced
- 1 teaspoon olive oil or high-oleic safflower oil
- 1 teaspoon butter
- 2 large eggs
- 1 ounce Cheddar, Monterey Jack, or other hard cheese

Sauté vegetables, onion, and mushrooms in oil and butter until all are tender, about 12 minutes; this time can be cut in half by precooking the vegetables in a microwave for 2 to 3 minutes. Add eggs and cook until firm. Place cheese on top of the eggs and then fold in half, into a semi-circle.

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**OPTIONAL:** Layer with thin avocado slices or scallions. Top with hot sauce or salsa.

## SOUTH OF THE BORDER BREAKFAST BURRITO

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The omelet on page 157 makes a great breakfast burrito filling. Instead of creating an omelet, simply stir in the eggs to cook and then use a spatula to fill a flour tortilla. Fold bottom end of tortilla up over filling about one inch and then roll in sides to form a nice burrito shape. Top with avocado, salsa, scallions, cilantro, a dollop of sour cream, and/or lime juice, and eat with a fork and knife. If you prefer to eat as a wrap, apply the toppings before folding tortilla.

# SALADS AND STARTERS

## ANTIPASTI/HORS D'OEUVRES

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A plate of antipasti (Italy) or hors d'oeuvres (France) can be served to a party of many guests, but a few of these ingredients can be enjoyed before a meal on your own. Most of the foods in this list can be purchased ready to eat, challenging the notion of unhealthy premade foods. Watch the salt content, especially of the artichoke hearts, olives, mushrooms, cheeses, and meats, and heed the standard warning about iron in crackers and bread. Artichoke hearts in oil are best; those in brine typically have far too much salt to be eaten alone.

**SERVINGS: VARIES PER NUMBER OF PEOPLE**

Bell peppers  
Mixed olives  
Marinated mushrooms (jarred or canned)  
Cheeses  
Artichoke hearts (jarred or canned in oil)  
Prosciutto and salami  
Crackers and small disks of baguette  
Cherry tomatoes  
Sardines (canned)  
Extra virgin olive oil for dipping  
Olive oil vinaigrette (see recipe below)

1. Wash the peppers, cut away the stems, and remove the ribs and seeds. Slice into strips.
2. Arrange all ingredients on a cutting board or platter, along with a glass of wine or refreshing mint or jasmine green tea.

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**OPTIONAL:** Try adding a bit of crushed or roasted garlic or crushed red pepper flakes to the dipping oil.

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**OPTIONAL:** For a MediterAsian-style appetizer and presentation, serve peppers, tomatoes, sardines, thinly sliced carrot sticks, and blanched peapods or sugar snap peas with a dipping bowl of Japanese ginger dressing (see recipe on p. 162).

## CLASSIC OLIVE OIL VINAIGRETTE

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This classic vinaigrette and its simple variations go great with virtually any salad. Most vinegars will work fine, but red wine vinegar is the top choice.

**SERVINGS: 4**

1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil  
3 tablespoons red wine vinegar  
1 teaspoon oregano  
1 garlic clove, finely chopped or pressed  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
Black pepper to taste

1. Mix all ingredients together with a food processor or in bowl.
  2. Serve over a mixed green salad or with raw vegetables.
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**OPTIONAL:** For a creamy vinaigrette dressing, simply mix together a 2 to 1 ratio of dressing to mayonnaise, and add about 1 additional teaspoon of vinegar for every 2 tablespoons of dressing. For a garlic vinaigrette dressing, add 1 or even 2 additional cloves of finely chopped or pressed garlic. For Greek salad dressing, instead of 3 tablespoons of red wine vinegar, use 1 1/2 tablespoons of vinegar and 1 1/2 tablespoons of lemon juice.

## JAPANESE GINGER DRESSING

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This salad staple boasts X factors such as soy sauce and apple cider vinegar and has PUFA-balanced canola oil as its base. (You can use soybean oil instead, but the PUFA balance is not as good.)

### SERVINGS: 6

- ¼ cup canola oil
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped scallion (or other onion)
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped celery
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped gingerroot
- 1 teaspoon lime juice
- Black pepper to taste

1. Mix all ingredients together with a food processor or in bowl.
2. Serve over a mixed green salad or with raw vegetables.

## GREEN SALAD

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A green salad is a flavorful staple of all Mediterranean Mindspan Elite cuisines. Try different lettuces. A top choice is red leaf lettuce with occasional additions of watercress. Healthful and tasty salads can be as simple as some lettuce and dressing, or marvelously complex, with over a dozen ingredients. The core of this recipe makes for a simple mixed green side or main salad. The options span a wide spectrum of flavorful ingredients.

**SERVINGS: 2 LARGE OR 4 SMALL SIDE SALADS**

- 1 or 2 bunches lettuce (to make 2 cups shredded)
- 1 large tomato
- ½ large cucumber, peeled and sliced
- ½ small red, orange, or yellow pepper, sliced
- A few slices of sweet or red onion
- Olive oil vinaigrette (see recipe on p. 161)

Rinse lettuce leaves well and dry (preferably in a salad spinner). Shred to make 2 cups. Cut tomato in sections and remove seeds, if desired. Place lettuce in a medium salad bowl, pour the vinaigrette over it and toss, then arrange the other ingredients on top.

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**OPTIONAL:** For variety, try adding steamed asparagus or another vegetable (either raw or cooked), including sliced carrots and small bits of cauliflower. Good cold additions are anchovies, olives, capers, marinated mushrooms, raisins, walnut pieces, pecans, berries, and a cheese of your choice. For variety in greens, try green leaf lettuce or romaine, with minor additions of spinach, chicory, escarole, borage, purslane, mint, arugula/rocket, watercress, or sorrel.

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**MAIN COURSE OPTION:** To make this salad a main course for lunch, per person add a sliced hard-boiled egg and ½ cup kidney beans, and serve with some herbed rice or pasta on the side.

## GREEK SALAD

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Greek salad is a classic, and this salad is a large starter or a main meal, with some additions. Try this with a firm lettuce, such as romaine.

**SERVINGS: 2**

- 4 to 6 slices red onion
- 2 cups shredded lettuce
- 1 large plum tomato
- ½ large cucumber, peeled and sliced
- ½ small green pepper, chopped
- ½ small red pepper, chopped
- ¼ cup chopped kalamata or black olives
- ⅓ cup crumbled feta cheese (may also be cut into small bite-size chunks)
- Greek salad dressing (see optional recipe on p. 161)

1. Soak onion slices in a bowl of ice water for 10 minutes to reduce the intensity of the flavor. Then dry the rings and cut in half. Combine all ingredients except for the feta cheese and dressing in a medium salad bowl. Pour 2 servings of salad dressing onto the salad and toss to mix. Place the feta cheese on top of the salad.
2. Serve with a slice of sourdough bread and olive oil for dipping.

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**OPTIONAL:** Try with red or green leaf lettuce.



## GOAT CHEESE AND PEAR TORTA

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Goat cheese is low in lactose and is fermented, which makes it an ideal choice for this Italian starter staple. But you can also experiment with different kinds of cheese and fruit or preserves. One great alternative is blue cheese instead of goat cheese, or figs or fig jam instead of cooked pear. If you use fig jam, don't cook it in the pan; simply spread it on the torta.

### SERVINGS: 2

- 2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil
- ½ teaspoon fresh rosemary
- 2 teaspoons pear vinegar or vinegar of choice
- 1 small shallot, halved and sliced
- 1 small pear, cored and cut into ¼-inch slices
- 1 medium to large tortilla
- 1 ounce goat cheese
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste

1. Add olive oil to a medium skillet over medium-low heat, then add rosemary, vinegar, shallot, and pear and cook 10 minutes or until both the pear and the shallot are tender and the shallot is translucent. Meanwhile, cover tortilla with small bits or a thin smear of goat cheese. Once the shallot and pear mixture is done, place it on the tortilla evenly, heat in an oven or toaster oven at 350°F for a few minutes, cut into 6 to 8 slices, and top with freshly ground pepper.
2. Serve with salad or other appetizers, such as olives or antipasti.

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**OPTIONAL:** Drizzle the top of the finished torta with a balsamic vinegar reduction, which you can purchase in fine food and cooking stores (don't use balsamic vinegar simply dyed with caramel color).

## CHICKPEA AND FAVA BEAN TAPENADE

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This is a great mindspan starter for vegans. If you'd rather have a nonvegetarian Mediterranean option, mash into the bean mixture one 2-ounce can of anchovies, or anchovies and capers, in olive oil. If you have trouble finding fava beans, it's fine to substitute lima beans.

### SERVINGS: 4 TO 6

- 1 15-ounce can fava beans, drained
- 1 15-ounce can chickpeas (garbanzo beans), drained
- 1 cup water
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon vinegar of choice
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- 1 heaping teaspoon chopped capers
- 8 medium olives, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, chopped or pressed
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh mint
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh parsley
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes, or dash of hot sauce
- Salt and black pepper to taste

1. In a saucepan, covered, cook fava beans and chickpeas in water for 10 minutes. Pour the beans and chickpeas into a medium mixing bowl and mash with a fork until a uniform paste is achieved (a food processor can be used instead). Stir in the remaining ingredients.
2. Serve with raw vegetables, crackers, or toasted bread.

## MEDI BRUSCHETTA TOPPING

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While many traditional Mediterranean bruschettas contain mozzarella, feta, or goat cheese, I don't think these are necessary thanks to the sharp flavors of these vegetarian ingredients. Again, this is a great vegan option, and it's so versatile it can go with anything—raw vegetables, crackers, even toasted bread. Nevertheless, if you're feeling deprived of your favorite cheese, by all means, add it in!

### SERVINGS: 2 TO 4

2 large sun-dried tomatoes  
1 small zucchini, finely diced and cooked  
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil  
2 plum tomatoes, diced  
1 tablespoon vinegar of choice  
8 medium olives, chopped  
1 heaping teaspoon chopped capers  
½ cup finely chopped sweet onions  
2 garlic cloves, chopped or pressed  
1 small carrot, peeled and shredded  
1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh basil  
¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes  
Salt and black pepper to taste

Rehydrate the sun-dried tomatoes in a small container or mug with 3 to 4 volumes of hot water. A microwave accelerates the process. (You can also cook the chopped zucchini at the same time in the microwave.) Mix the other ingredients in a small mixing bowl. After the sun-dried tomatoes are fully hydrated, mince them and stir them into the final topping mix.

## PROVENÇAL COUSCOUS SALAD

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This classic couscous salad is made with seasonal ingredients available in many Mediterranean countries. It is served cold or at room temperature. The Greek tabbouleh salad recipe following is made from all the same ingredients by simply substituting bulgur wheat for the couscous. Variations of either can be made by adding black or kalamata olives, chopped red onion, or capers.

### SERVINGS: 6 TO 8

- 3 medium tomatoes
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup uncooked couscous
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1¼ cups water
- 2 tablespoons white wine vinegar
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- 2 cups minced fresh parsley
- 3 cups minced fresh mint
- A few grinds of black pepper

Chop tomatoes, place in a colander in the sink or inside a large bowl, add ½ teaspoon of the salt, and mix well. Let drain for 30 minutes. In a large mixing bowl, add couscous and olive oil, and mix until the oil is well distributed. Boil water and add to the couscous and oil mixture. Stir and fluff with a fork. Let cool for 15 minutes, then stir in vinegar, lemon juice, parsley, mint, and remaining ½ teaspoon salt. Finally, stir in the drained tomatoes and pepper.

## GREEK TABBOULEH SALAD

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This dish is recent to Greece but is consistent with general mindspan dietary guidelines. This salad is essentially identical to the Provençal couscous salad on the previous page, except for the use of bulgur wheat instead of couscous.

### SERVINGS: 6 TO 8

3 medium tomatoes  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 cup bulgur wheat  
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil  
1¼ cups water  
2 tablespoons white wine vinegar  
¼ cup lemon juice  
2 cups minced fresh parsley  
3 cups minced fresh mint  
A few grinds of fresh black pepper

Chop tomatoes, place in a colander in the sink or inside a large bowl, add ½ teaspoon of the salt, and mix well. Let drain for 30 minutes. In a large mixing bowl, add bulgur and olive oil, and mix until the oil is well distributed. Boil water and add to the bulgur and oil mixture. Stir and fluff with a fork. Let cool for 15 minutes, then stir in vinegar, lemon juice, parsley, mint, and remaining ½ teaspoon salt. Finally, stir in the drained tomatoes and pepper.

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**OPTIONAL:** Tabbouleh made according to this recipe is vegan, but small bits or squares of feta cheese (about ¼ cup) can be added for a more authentic Greek flavor. Try adding olives, chopped red onion, or capers.

# SOUPS AND STEWS

## ZUCCHINI SOUP (OR PUMPKIN SOUP)

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This smooth soup boasts the ability to appear and taste creamy without any cream! If you'd like to pump up the flavor or simply try a variation, you can always grate cheese on top, or stir in a dollop of sour cream or crème fraîche.

### SERVINGS: 4

- 5 small to medium zucchini (or 1½ pounds pumpkin)
- 1½ tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 2 medium onions, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, chopped or pressed
- 2½ cups chicken or vegetable broth
- 1 large tomato, peeled, chopped, and seeds removed
- 1 teaspoon sage (fresh if possible)
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 cup precooked rice

1. This soup can be prepared by first shredding the zucchini in a food processor, or by chopping the zucchini into small pieces, cooking the soup, and then passing it through a food mill or pureeing with a food processor, blender, or hand blender. The goal is to make the zucchini creamy, not chunky. If using a food mill, add the rice only after the soup is passed through the mill.
2. Heat olive oil in a large frying pan over medium heat and add chopped onions. Cook onions until translucent (about 6 to 8 minutes). Add garlic and zucchini and sauté for about 5 minutes. Add broth, tomato, sage, and pepper and cook on low to medium heat for 25 minutes. If the soup isn't creamy, it can be passed through a food mill. After milling or before serving, return to the pan, add the cooked rice, and heat for 5 minutes.

## CREAMY TOMATO SOUP

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The ultimate childhood comfort food, this grown-up version has a fraction of the calories and sodium content and gets most of its flavor from fresh vegetables and seasonings. If you've got kids, they'll love it too.

### SERVINGS: 4

- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 large garlic clove, minced or pressed
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 6 large tomatoes, or 1 28-ounce can diced tomatoes
- 3 cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup chopped carrots
- 1 small bay leaf
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme, or 1 sprig fresh thyme
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh dill
- A few leaves fresh basil, chopped (about 1 tablespoon)
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Add the onions and garlic to the olive oil and butter in a large stockpot, and cook over medium-low heat until the onions are soft and light golden. Stir in the flour and cook for 2 minutes. Add the tomatoes, broth, carrots, bay leaf, and thyme and cook for 30 minutes on low heat, stirring occasionally. Add the dill and basil, mix well, and cook for an additional 10 minutes. Take the soup from heat and remove the bay leaf and thyme sprig, if using. Using a hand blender or food processor, puree the soup. Season with salt and pepper.



## KALE AND CANNELLINI SOUP

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The beans give this soup a rich, hearty texture, canceling out the need for animal protein (or cream). You can always add a couple of ounces of diced ham for a more stick-to-your-ribs option.

### SERVINGS: 4

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, pressed or minced
- 1 bunch kale (about 12 ounces), ribs removed and chopped
- 4 cups chicken or vegetable broth
- 1 15-ounce can cannellini beans
- 2 ounces ham, diced (optional)
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Heat olive oil in a large stockpot, add onions and garlic, and cook until slightly brown but not burnt. Place the kale and broth in the pot, and cook covered for 15 minutes. Add beans and ham, if desired, and cook for an additional 5 to 10 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

## ONION AND GARLIC SOUP

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This combination of onion and garlic (a healthier twist on French onion soup) is milder than it sounds and should scare only vampires. Try various kinds and combinations of onions.

### SERVINGS: 4

- 6 large onions
- 6 garlic cloves
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 3 cups beef or vegetable broth
- Black pepper to taste
- ¼ cup white wine
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 to 2 ounces of a flavorful hard cheese (e.g., asiago),  
grated

Slice onions and garlic and sauté in olive oil until translucent but not brown or burnt. Put broth in a 2-quart saucepan and add the sautéed onions and garlic. While the soup is simmering, add pepper, wine, soy sauce, and Worcestershire sauce. Stir occasionally for 10 minutes. Remove from heat and transfer mixture to serving crocks or bowls. Top with cheese.

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**OPTIONAL:** After topping with cheese, bake uncovered for 10 to 15 minutes at 275°F. If you're in a rush, forget baking; just break off a small piece of country sourdough and go—slowly!—to town.

## ROASTED TOMATO AND BEAN SOUP

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The flavor of the roasted tomatoes makes this soup special. It lies somewhere between that of sun-dried tomatoes and excellent tomato paste, but it has a slight smokiness. The roasted tomatoes are the key ingredient. Nevertheless, if you are pressed for time, you can use rehydrated sun-dried tomatoes for a slightly different but excellent flavor.

### SERVINGS: 4

6 large tomatoes  
3 tablespoons olive oil  
1 large onion, chopped  
3 garlic cloves, minced or pressed  
1 tablespoon butter  
2 tablespoons flour  
3 cups chicken or vegetable broth  
1 teaspoon chopped rosemary  
1 teaspoon chopped sage  
1 teaspoon chopped oregano  
1 15-ounce can navy beans or cannellini beans  
Salt and black pepper to taste

1. Slice tomatoes into 4 equal circular pieces each and place in a single layer in a glass baking dish coated with 2 tablespoons of the olive oil. Roast at 425°F for 30 minutes, turn the slices over, and roast an additional 30 minutes.
2. While the tomatoes are roasting, prepare the soup. Add onions and garlic to remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil in a medium stockpot, and cook until slightly brown but not burnt. Push the onion-garlic mixture to the side and make the roux in the center of the pan: add butter to the pan and whisk in the flour over medium heat until thickened and slightly brown. Add broth, herbs, and beans. Once the tomatoes are roasted and dry, but not desiccated, add them to the soup and cook for an additional 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Season with salt and pepper.

## MEDITERRANEAN MUSHROOM STEW

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This wonderful meatless stew is a great family dish! It's also delicious with a small amount of beef. (Not everyone needs an iron-restricted diet, especially younger women.) This recipe calls for a bouquet garni, which usually means a bunch of parsley, a sprig of thyme, and a bay leaf, either tied together or in a cooking bag. I suggest extra thyme for this recipe; try 3 sprigs.

### SERVINGS: 6

2 tablespoons extra light olive oil  
1 pound stew beef, cut into 1-inch cubes (optional)  
4 garlic cloves  
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil  
2 medium onions, peeled and quartered  
6 large carrots, peeled and chopped, or ½ pound baby carrots  
1 celery stalk, chopped  
1 bouquet garni  
1 tablespoon butter  
¼ cup flour  
4 cups low-sodium vegetable or beef broth, or water  
3 tomatoes, diced, or 1 15-ounce can crushed or diced tomatoes  
2 cups dry red wine  
½ pound green peas (frozen are fine)  
1 pound small potatoes, cut into bite-size chunks  
2 pounds fresh mushrooms (1 pound if using beef), cut into chunks  
Chopped parsley

1. Add the extra light olive oil to a large stockpot.
2. If you're using beef, heat the stockpot on medium-high heat. Once the oil is hot, add beef and cook over high heat until all pieces are browned. Remove from heat.
3. Smash the garlic cloves by pushing down on them with the side of a large kitchen knife, and remove the papery outer skin. In a large skillet,

add 2 tablespoons of the extra virgin olive oil, onions, garlic, carrots, celery, and bouquet garni, and cook until the garlic and onions are golden. Place the stockpot over medium heat (if meat is included, push the meat to the side, away from the heat) and add remaining 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil and the butter to the empty portion of the pot, and stir in the flour a bit at a time to make a roux. Once the flour has thickened, stir in broth, tomatoes, wine, peas, potatoes, mushrooms, and sautéed vegetables and bouquet garni. Simmer on low heat for 3 to 4 hours. Remove the bouquet garni before serving.

4. Top with a garnish of parsley. This is a meal in itself and requires no side dishes or rice, but it goes well with a bit of rice.

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**OPTIONAL:** For a Japanese infusion, you can use shiitake mushrooms.

## KOMBU DASHI (VEGETARIAN DASHI)

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This broth is the main ingredient in the fish dashi on the next page, and it is a great base for making vegetarian miso soup.

2 cups water

10 to 12 square inches (for example, 2 inches  
by 5 inches) kombu (dried kelp)

Add the water to a stockpot. Rinse kelp with cold tap water and add to the water. Stir and turn the heat to high. Just as the water begins to boil, turn the heat to low. Let kombu remain in the water for 2 minutes, then remove.

## DASHI (FISH DASHI)

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This broth forms the basis of many Japanese soups and recipes. Good instant dashi can be found in some Asian food stores, but watch out for the MSG, since most have it. It is also easy to make fresh. This recipe uses fewer bonito flakes than many authentic Japanese recipes, and the flavor is a nice, mild dashi.

2 cups kombu dashi (see recipe on p. 178)

½ cup bonito flakes

This broth can be made immediately following preparation of kombu dashi, or heat the previously made kombu dashi to boiling. Add bonito flakes, remove from heat, and let stand for 10 minutes or until flakes have settled to the bottom. Place a fine strainer in a bowl and pour in the dashi (a paper towel in a colander works fine if you don't have a strainer).

## MISO SOUP BASE

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This soup is ubiquitous in Japan, and it is served at breakfast, lunch, and dinner. A great variety of flavorful soups can be created with various additions, including tofu, scallions and other onions, vegetables, and a wide variety of mushrooms. A small amount of vinegar intensifies the flavor, without the high salt content of traditional miso soup.

2 cups dashi or kombu dashi (see recipes on pp. 179  
and 178)

2 teaspoons vinegar

1 to 2 tablespoons miso paste (depending on salt  
content and flavor desired)

Pour dashi or kombu dashi and vinegar in a saucepan and heat on high until about to boil, then reduce heat and simmer on medium-low. Add the miso and stir vigorously until all the miso is dissolved.

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**OPTIONAL:** Try adding tofu; shiitake, shimeji, or enoki mushrooms; and scallions. Also try adding a bit of herring, sardine, or anchovy.



## OKINAWAN SOBA NOODLE SOUP

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Okinawan soba noodles are made of white flour. If you can't find them, substitute Japanese udon noodles or trenette, which is a common Ligurian pasta.

### SERVINGS: 4

4 cups commercial miso broth or miso soup base  
(see recipe on p. 180)

½ cup dried shiitake mushrooms

7 ounces dry Okinawan soba noodles

3 to 4 bite-size squares firm tofu per serving

In a medium saucepan, add miso broth and shiitake mushrooms. Simmer on low heat for about 15 minutes while you cook the noodles. In a second saucepan, cook the noodles according to the package directions, then drain. Add the noodles and tofu to the broth, and cook on medium heat for 5 minutes.

## SARDINE AND SORREL SOUP

---

There are countless variations of this standard Japanese miso-based soup. Miso paste can now be found in many supermarkets. To make a vegetarian version, simply omit the sardines and use tofu. Tofu is an optional addition to the sardine-based version.

### SERVINGS: 4

- 4 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- 1 tablespoon vinegar
- 2 tablespoons miso paste
- ½ 4- to 5-ounce can sardines in water (2 small sardines),  
or ½ cup cubed tofu
- ½ cup fresh brown or shiitake mushrooms (or canned  
or rehydrated dried shiitake mushrooms)
- A few leaves sorrel, sliced into short, thin strips
- Black, Szechuan, or sansho pepper to taste

Add broth and vinegar to a saucepan over medium heat. Place miso paste in a small mixing bowl and add about ½ cup warmed broth. With a whisk, rapidly mix the miso into the broth. Once the miso is fully dissolved, add the mixture to the pan. Add sardines, if using, to the broth and mash with a fork. Remove the mushroom stems and discard, then thinly slice mushrooms. Add mushroom slices, sorrel strips, and tofu cubes, if using, to the pan. Cook about 10 minutes, then season with black, Szechuan, or sansho pepper.

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**OPTIONAL:** Japanese dashi or another fish broth can substitute for the sardine broth.

## SHRIMP AND VEGETABLE SOUP

---

This is an adaptation of a typical Japanese soup. A vegetarian preparation of this soup substitutes tofu for the shrimp and vegetable broth for chicken broth. All ingredients should be available at most supermarkets, including pickled ginger and shiitake mushrooms. Make a homemade chicken broth or select a commercial brand by the highest available amount of protein (this is a sign of how watery the broth is).

### SERVINGS: 4

- 4 cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
- ½ small onion
- 1 teaspoon pickled ginger
- 1 small carrot
- 4 medium fresh brown or shiitake mushrooms  
(or canned shiitake mushrooms)
- 2 ounces snow peas (about 25)
- 2 teaspoons soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon vinegar or sake
- 4 large peeled shrimp, or about ½ cup cubed tofu
- Black pepper to taste

Add broth to a saucepan over medium heat. Finely chop onion and stir into the broth. While the onion cooks (about 8 to 10 minutes), prepare the other ingredients. First chop the pickled ginger into small pieces and add to the broth. Cut the carrot into very thin slivers up to 2 inches long, then add to the broth. Turn heat up to a slow boil while preparing the remaining ingredients. Remove and discard the mushroom stem ends and cut the mushrooms into thin slices, then add them to the broth. Remove and discard the ends and strings from the snow peas, then slice into slivers similar to the carrots. Add soy sauce and vinegar or sake to the saucepan, then add shrimp or tofu and snow peas, and cook until the shrimp turn pink. Season with pepper. Ladle into bowls and serve immediately.

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**OPTIONAL:** Instead of shrimp, you can substitute fish, scallops, crab, other seafood, or even chicken or meat.

SANDWICHES AND  
EASY FINGER FOODS

## PUMPKIN BREAD GRILLED CHEESE SANDWICH

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This sandwich is made with homemade pumpkin semolina bread, using the recipe on p. 235. Cheddar cheese, like most hard cheeses, is low in lactose—and it happens to be the perfect cheese for this sandwich.

### SERVINGS: 1

- 1 slice Cheddar or other hard cheese
- 2 slices pumpkin semolina bread
- Butter
- 2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil

For each sandwich, place 1 slice of cheese between 2 slices of bread and butter the top of the sandwich. Add olive oil to a medium frying pan and heat over medium heat. Once the pan is hot, place the sandwich in the pan, butter side up. Brown the bottom slice for about 4 minutes, occasionally lifting to ensure that the bottom isn't burning. Once the bottom is a golden-brown color, flip the sandwich onto the buttered side. Cook another 3 to 4 minutes.

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**OPTIONAL:** Other good cheeses to try are Gouda, Monterey Jack, Brie, dill Havarti, Swiss, and Emmentaler.

## EGG SALAD SANDWICH

---

Eggs are a flavorful, low-iron source of protein—and they even inhibit absorption of iron from other foods! For these reasons, they are one of the best sources of animal protein. Nevertheless, don't go egg wild since they have high levels of methionine. Make sure you buy organic, to ensure a good omega-3 to omega-6 balance. The mayo is an excellent way to get additional omega-3 into your diet.

### SERVINGS: 4

- 6 large eggs
- 3 tablespoons canola oil or soybean oil mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoon brown or Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped scallion
- ¼ teaspoon paprika

1. Cover the eggs with about 1 inch of water in a large saucepan. Bring the water to a boil, place the lid on the pan, turn off the heat, and let stand for 10 minutes. Run cool water into the pan to cool. Once they are cool, peel the eggs. In a medium to large mixing bowl, mash the eggs with a fork and then mix with the other ingredients.
2. This sandwich can be made with bread slices or as a wrap with a flour tortilla. Top with tomato slices and lettuce.

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**OPTIONAL:** Try subtracting 1 tablespoon mayonnaise, mashing in an avocado, and adding a small amount of chopped ham, to make delicious “Green Eggs and Ham” salad sandwiches!

## AVOCADO HUMMUS DIP OR WRAP

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This avocado hummus can be used as a dip or in a wrap sandwich. The high-fiber and MUFA-rich avocado largely replaces the sesame tahini, which is the traditional ingredient of this Middle Eastern dish.

### SERVINGS: 4

- 1 15-ounce can chickpeas (garbanzo beans), drained
- 2 medium Hass avocados, peeled and pitted
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped red onion
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 to 2 tablespoons sesame tahini
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon vinegar
- ½ to 1 teaspoon salt
- Black pepper to taste

1. Place chickpeas and avocado flesh in a medium mixing bowl and mash with a large fork or potato masher. Mix in the remaining ingredients.
2. As a dip, serve with small pieces of bread and an array of raw vegetables, including broccoli and cauliflower florets, cherry tomatoes, artichoke hearts, and bite-size sticks of carrot, zucchini, and celery.
3. This can be made as a wrap with a flour tortilla. Add lettuce, tomato, or slices of sweet pickled red pepper. (For a sandwich, use slices of bread.) Serve with a dill pickle quarter on the side.

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**OPTIONAL:** Add a dash of hot sauce.

## SARDINE SANDWICH

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Sub this simple sardine sandwich for your usual tuna on rye. It's easy to make and has far more healthful very long chain omega-3s than most canned tuna—plus, it's even more flavorful and contains a lot less mercury.

### SERVINGS: 1

- 1 tablespoon mayonnaise (with olive, canola, or soybean oil)
- 1 teaspoon finely chopped onion
- ½ teaspoon sweet relish
- 2 teaspoons chopped celery (optional)
- 1 teaspoon ketchup (optional)
- Black pepper to taste
- 3 ounces canned sardines

1. Place all ingredients except the sardines in a small mixing bowl and blend together. Add the sardines, chop into coarse chunks with a fork, and mix until well blended, but leave the sardines slightly chunky.
2. This sandwich can be made with slices of bread or as a wrap with a flour tortilla. Top with lettuce and tomato. The optional ketchup gives the dressing a Thousand Island quality. Serve with a dill pickle quarter on the side.



## BEAN AND CHEESE BURRITOS

---

This fiber-filled meal is rich in plant-based protein and healthful carbs. Make sure you stick to a hard cheese, like Cheddar or Monterey Jack, which are low in lactose.

### SERVINGS: 4

1 cup water  
1 15-ounce can beans (black, pinto, etc.), drained  
1 large onion, diced  
½ teaspoon cumin  
1 bay leaf  
½ cups chopped vegetables (zucchini, bell peppers, etc.)  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
2 cups precooked white rice  
1 teaspoon lime juice  
4 large tortillas (not iron-enriched)  
Cheddar, Monterey Jack, or similar hard cheese  
Avocado slices  
Chopped cilantro  
Salt, cayenne pepper, crushed red pepper flakes, or  
hot sauce to taste

1. In a small saucepan, cook water, beans, onions, cumin, and bay leaf for 15 minutes over medium heat. Meanwhile, in a medium skillet, sauté vegetables in olive oil. After 15 minutes add rice, cooked beans, and lime juice to the vegetables in the skillet. Remove the bay leaf. Heat burrito filling until rice is hot. Fill each tortilla, top each with cheese, and fold them into burrito shapes.
2. Top with avocado slices, a dollop of sour cream, chopped cilantro, and a squeeze of lime juice.

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**OPTIONAL:** Beans can be mashed and spooned into the tortillas instead of mixed whole with the vegetables.

## EAST MEETS WEST

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There is not much overlap between Japanese and Western cuisines, but there is one Western cuisine that combines the best of both worlds: the Mediterranean Rivieran cuisine. Some common foods you'll find on both menus: Japanese eggplant, bell peppers, fava and other beans, sardines, eggs, rice and wheat, noodles, bread, many kinds of mushrooms, pumpkin and other squash, carrots, peas, cucumbers, onions, garlic, spinach and other greens, nuts (including favored chestnuts), and various fish and seafood. Unlike many other cuisines, a main ingredient in both is dried fish. Rivierans love dried cod and the Japanese use dashi (a broth flavored with dried, smoked, and fermented skipjack tuna) in many dishes. You won't find much cheese, extra virgin olive oil, or tomatoes in traditional Japanese cuisine, but otherwise they are nutritionally similar and, of course, have both raised their respective populations to the mindspan pinnacle of the world.

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# VEGETABLES

## RIVIERAN EGGPLANT

---

Japanese eggplant, onion, garlic: Japanese or Mediterranean? Both! Japanese eggplant is even more versatile than the standard variety due to its thin skin. It's got a spongy, fleshy inside, making it easy for it to soak up the other flavors of tomato, garlic, and even honey or maple syrup that permeate this dish.

### SERVINGS: 4

- 6 small to medium Japanese eggplants, sliced ½ inch thick or thinner
- 1 medium onion, sliced
- 1 large or 2 small tomatoes, sliced, or 4 ounces low-salt tomato paste, or 1 14-ounce can diced or crushed Italian-style tomatoes
- 2 or 3 garlic cloves, pressed or diced
- 2 teaspoons basil
- 1 teaspoon oregano
- Dash of salt and black pepper
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 teaspoons honey or maple syrup
- 4 ounces Parmigiano-Reggiano or mozzarella cheese, grated or thinly sliced
- Light sprinkle of grated Parmesan or other hard cheese

1. In a casserole dish, layer half each of the eggplant, onion, and tomato slices. Top with half of the garlic, basil, oregano, and salt and pepper. Drizzle with half the olive oil and honey or maple syrup, then top with half the Parmigiano-Reggiano or mozzarella cheese. Repeat to form a second layer, and sprinkle with grated Parmesan or other cheese. Bake at 375°F for 45 minutes covered; uncover for the final 15 minutes.
2. Let cool. Serve on a plate in rectangular pieces with rice or pasta. Begin meal with a side salad that includes vinegar.

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**OPTIONAL:** May vary with seasonal vegetables, sliced zucchini, or other squash. You may double or triple the recipe; it freezes well and can be reheated.

## PIGEON PEAS AND VEGETABLES

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Like fava beans and chickpeas, pigeon peas have their own unique and wonderful flavor, and they are high in fiber and protein.

### SERVINGS: 4

- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 green bell pepper, cut into small strips
- 1 red bell pepper, cut into small strips
- 1 small sweet onion, cut into small strips
- 1 cup diced very ripe tomatoes, or 1 15-ounce can crushed or diced tomatoes
- 1 15-ounce can fava beans or pigeon peas, drained
- Kernels cut from 2 ears fresh corn, or 1 cup frozen corn
- Salt, black pepper, and cayenne pepper to taste

1. Add olive oil to a medium skillet, and sauté the bell peppers and onions over medium-high heat for 10 minutes. Add the tomatoes and fava beans or pigeon peas. Cook on medium heat for 15 minutes. Add the corn and cook for an additional 2 minutes to heat the corn. Season with salt, black pepper, and cayenne pepper.
2. Serve with rice.

## FAVA BEAN AND EGGPLANT STEW

---

This stew provides many of the delicious staples—fava beans, kalamata olives, colorful vegetables—of a traditional Greek diet. It's also packed with fiber, to help power your microbiome.

### SERVINGS: 4

4 medium to large tomatoes, sliced  
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil  
3 Japanese eggplants, cut into ½-inch cubes  
1 15- to 20-ounce can fava beans  
1 small garlic clove, pressed or minced  
1 medium zucchini, cut into semicircles  
2 teaspoons tomato paste  
1 2-ounce tin anchovies in olive oil  
10 to 12 kalamata olives, chopped  
12 capers, halved  
2 chicken thighs (optional)  
½ teaspoon coriander  
½ teaspoon marjoram or oregano  
Salt and black pepper to taste

1. Place the tomato slices in a single layer in a glass baking dish coated with 1 tablespoon of the olive oil. Roast at 425°F for 30 minutes, turn the slices over, and roast an additional 30 minutes.
2. While the tomatoes are roasting, add the remaining tablespoon olive oil to a large skillet, and sauté the eggplant over medium-high heat for 15 minutes. Add the remaining ingredients to the skillet and cook covered over medium-low heat for 45 minutes. Once the tomatoes are roasted, chop them up and then add them to the skillet and cook covered for an additional 40 minutes, with occasional stirring.
3. Serve over rice.

## PUMPKIN AND BEAN PATTIES

---

A common complaint about veggie burgers is they crumble apart when you're cooking them. This recipe uses plenty of healthful ingredients such as beans, pumpkin, and egg as sticky binders. You can substitute canned pumpkin if you're pressed for time.

### SERVINGS: 6

2 pounds fresh pumpkin, or 2 15-ounce cans  
cooked pumpkin

1 teaspoon chopped capers

1 15-ounce can chickpeas (garbanzo beans), black beans,  
or kidney beans

2 tablespoons chopped scallion

1 tablespoon sage

½ teaspoon salt

2 teaspoons lemon or lime juice

1 large egg

½ cup breadcrumbs

Salt and black pepper to taste

½ cup flour

1 tablespoon light olive oil

1. If using fresh pumpkin, seed and chop the pumpkin into 4 to 6 pieces and add to a baking dish containing about ½ inch of water. Roast the pumpkin in a 375°F oven for 45 minutes. Scrape the pumpkin flesh from the skin (try a grapefruit spoon).
2. Place the roasted pumpkin or canned pumpkin, if using, in a food processor with chopped capers, beans, scallion, sage, ½ teaspoon salt, and the lemon or lime juice. Pulse until mixed evenly. Add the egg and breadcrumbs and mix until uniform but individual chunks remain visible. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Shape the mixture into patty sizes appropriate for individual servings. Add the flour to a large, shallow bowl or flat work surface, and flour each side of the patties. Add the light olive oil to a large frying

pan and heat to medium-high heat. Once the oil is hot, place the patties gently in the pan. Cook about 3 minutes on each side until golden brown.

4. Serve as a main dish without a bun, or on a bun or bread as a burger.

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**OPTIONAL:** Instead of sage, try cilantro or parsley.



## ROMANO BEANS

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If you like green beans (a.k.a. string beans), then you'll love Romano beans. They are similar to green beans but longer, broader, and flatter. This recipe is incredibly easy, and the flavor is fabulous! This simple recipe also works great for green or wax beans, but the flavor of fresh Romano beans is unequaled.

### SERVINGS: 4

- 1 pound fresh Romano beans, ends removed
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped

Add the beans to a large pot of boiling water, return to a boil, and cook for 5 minutes, then drain. Add the olive oil, butter, garlic, and beans to large skillet and sauté the beans until they are slightly tender.

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**OPTIONAL:** Try sautéing with a teaspoon of lemon juice or some chopped chives, or topping with just a bit of your favorite grated hard cheese.

## BAKED SQUASH

---

This squash recipe could hardly be easier, and if you select a good squash the flavor is unbeatable!

**SERVINGS: 4**

2 medium to large delicata squash

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Select a baking dish that will hold all four halves of the squash and add about  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch of water. Cut the squash in half lengthwise and place cut side down in the water. Bake for 45 minutes, remove from the oven, turn the squash cut side up, and bake for an additional 20 minutes or until all the flesh is soft.

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**OPTIONAL:** Try other squash like acorn or spaghetti, but I think you'll discover that delicata is unsurpassed for flavor.

## GREEK LEMON ROASTED POTATOES

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This potato dish is ubiquitous throughout Greece. It makes a fabulous side dish for most entrées, especially Mediterranean dishes. Although cutting up the potatoes can be time-consuming, it's essential because the potato chunks absorb more of the seasonings and broth. Many kinds of potatoes work well for this dish, so experiment or use what you have on hand.

### SERVINGS: 6

3 pounds potatoes, cut into 1- to 1½-inch chunks  
⅓ cup extra virgin olive oil  
Juice of 2 medium lemons, or 2 tablespoons lemon juice  
4 garlic cloves, chopped  
2 teaspoons dried marjoram, or 1½ teaspoons dried oregano  
2 tablespoons white wine vinegar  
1 teaspoon salt  
A few grinds of black pepper  
2 cups vegetable broth or water  
Chopped fresh marjoram, oregano, or parsley

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F. In a large baking dish, add all the ingredients except the broth or water and fresh herbs. Stir the potatoes in the dish to coat completely with oil. Add the broth or water and cook for 45 minutes. Turn the potatoes, and cook for an additional 20 to 30 minutes, or until a fork passes easily through.
2. Serve topped with a bit of fresh marjoram, oregano, or parsley.

## STEWED CHICKPEAS

---

This is a standard dish of Genoese cuisine. It has a terrific, mildly nutty flavor that goes with pretty much anything: serve it as a side dish with rice, or with rustic bread as an appetizer.

### SERVINGS: 6

- 2 15-ounce cans chickpeas (garbanzo beans), drained
- 2 to 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 6 medium to large leaves Swiss chard, finely chopped
- 1 celery stalk, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, chopped or pressed
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh parsley
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 1 cup diced fresh tomatoes, or  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup diced or crushed  
canned tomatoes
- Grated Parmigiana-Reggiano, fontina, or  
Parmesan cheese

1. Cover the chickpeas with 1 inch of water in a large stockpot, cover loosely, and simmer for 1 hour. Sauté the onions, Swiss chard, celery, garlic, and parsley in the olive oil in a frying pan on medium heat for about 30 minutes. Drain the chickpeas and add the lemon juice, tomatoes, and sautéed mixture to the chickpeas. Cook the mixture on low heat for an additional hour.
2. Top with the cheese.

## ZUKE CHANPURU (OKINAWAN STIR-FRY)

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This recipe is made traditionally with goya, a.k.a. bitter melon, which is an acquired taste. People vary in their tolerance/preference for bitter flavors, and goya is *very* bitter. The primary recipe here substitutes zucchini, but I also provide instructions for how to make the traditional version. Look for the lighter, yellower goya for a less bitter flavor. If you can't find goya or if you simply don't like its strong, bitter flavor, go with the zucchini. The goya recipe is more traditional with pork, but feel free to leave it out, since the egg and tofu provide plenty of flavor and protein.

### SERVINGS: 4 TO 6

4 medium zucchini, or 2 medium goya  
1 teaspoon salt, if using goya  
¼ cup water, if using goya  
1 14- to 16-ounce package extra firm tofu  
2 tablespoons light olive or canola oil  
4 ounces pork belly, sliced ⅛ to ¼ inch thick,  
or 2 ounces bacon  
1 medium onion, diced  
2 teaspoons miso paste  
1 tablespoon sake (optional)  
3 eggs, lightly beaten  
1 tablespoon soy sauce  
Salt and black pepper to taste

1. For zucchini, slice the zucchini lengthwise down the center, then cut into ¼-inch-thick half-moon slices.
2. For goya, cut the goya lengthwise and scoop out and discard the white fleshy center. Cut into crescent-moon slices about ¼ inch thick. Mix in a large bowl with 1 teaspoon salt and water, stir occasionally for 20 minutes, then blanch the melon slices in a large pot of boiling water for 3 minutes (this reduces the bitter flavor). Remove the goya slices to a colander and dry with paper towels.
3. Remove the tofu from the package, discard the liquid, cut into ½-inch cubes, and set aside. Place the oil and pork in a wok or large skillet,

and cook until it is lightly browned. Add the zucchini or goya, onions, and miso paste, and stir-fry on medium heat until the onions are translucent and golden. Add the tofu, stir-fry an additional minute, then add the sake, if desired, and eggs on top and let cook without stirring until the eggs are mostly set. Add the soy sauce and salt and pepper, and stir gently to mix.

4. This stir-fry goes great on a bed of rice, or on the side.

## MUSHROOMS, CARROTS, AND SEA VEGETABLES ON NOODLES

---

This Japanese staple is a great way to squeeze in sea vegetables, which offer a wide array of minerals (and you can even pick up sheets of nori seaweed in mainstream supermarkets or megastores like Walmart). Soba noodles make a great base, absorbing the flavor of the soy and seaweed. You can also serve this with rice.

### SERVINGS: 4

- 10 ounces fresh shiitake or oyster mushrooms,  
or 2 ounces dried shiitake mushrooms, rehydrated
- 2 teaspoons canola oil
- 1½ cups julienned carrots
- ¼ cup dashi (see recipe on p. 179) or water
- 1 tablespoon vinegar
- 2 sheets nori seaweed
- 2 teaspoons soy sauce
- 7 ounces soba noodles
- Sesame seeds (optional)

1. Slice the mushrooms. Add the canola oil and carrots to a large skillet or wok over medium heat. Stir the carrots in the oil and then add the dashi or water and vinegar. Chop or slice the nori into bite-size bits or strips. It helps to wet it slightly, but don't get it too wet or it will disintegrate. Cook the carrots until the liquid has evaporated, then add the mushrooms and nori. Cook another 3 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in the soy sauce.
2. Cook the soba noodles according to the package instructions. Serve the stir-fry over noodles. Sprinkle with sesame seeds, if desired.

## GINGER CARROTS

---

This fiber-rich, sweet, and tangy side dish gets a major flavor and health boost with the addition of X factors vinegar and mirin.

**SERVINGS: 4**

1/3 cup vinegar, preferably rice vinegar

1/2 pound carrots, peeled and julienned

1/2 teaspoon grated gingerroot

1 teaspoon mirin

Pour the vinegar in a small saucepan. Add the carrots, ginger, and mirin. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and cover with a lid. Cook on medium-low heat for 12 minutes, or until the carrots are tender.



## PASTA, RICE, AND BARLEY

**O**NCE AGAIN, *ALWAYS* SELECT GRAINS THAT ARE NOT enriched with iron.

Keep rice and pasta at the ready. I always have precooked rice and pasta stored in the refrigerator. I typically make enough for three to four days. Not only is it convenient when you're busy, but cycles of heating and cooling promote the formation of digestion-resistant starch. Cook pasta according to the manufacturer's directions, and cook only until al dente (firm). Instructions on cooking rice can be found in the recipes. I also precook barley, but not as much of it as rice or pasta; it also refrigerates well, but I eat less of it.

**PASTA.** Dry pasta should be boiled in water containing a few shakes of salt and a teaspoon of olive oil. According to the nearly universal preference in Mindspan Elite Mediterranean areas, pasta must be cooked al dente. Always test the pasta as it nears readiness and drain into a colander once it reaches al dente.

**RICE AND BARLEY.** In general, rice should be steamed with twice the volume of high-quality water. For example, 1 cup rice requires 2 cups water. Rice should always be washed a few times with clean water prior to cooking. Since it is difficult to measure the appro-

appropriate amount of water once rice is wet, buy a container (glass, polypropylene, or other nonleaching plastic) that is graduated in thirds. For plain rice, fill the container with rice to one-third, wash the rice thoroughly, and then fill the other two-thirds of the container with water. Cook the rice on the stove or in a microwave for 20 minutes, stir to mix, and leave covered for an additional 5 minutes. Use a similar washing procedure when using an automatic rice maker. All of the same preparation steps and measurements should be used to cook pearled barley, but the cooking time for the quick-cook variety is only 10 to 12 minutes. Any dish that calls for rice can be served with barley, but I recommend and usually eat rice.

#### HOW MUCH PASTA?

One common refrain we hear about Mediterranean eating is that pasta is only a small side dish. Of course, Italy is the epicenter of pasta production and consumption, but its neighbors of the French Riviera love pasta too. The most authoritative and oft-referenced work on traditional cuisine of the French Riviera was published in 1972 by the mayor of Nice, Jacques Médecin, and he provides a clear answer to the question of how much pasta to serve.

Médecin says he knows “pasta freaks who would not balk at a 1 pound/500 gram helping,” but he concluded after consulting with restaurant owners that a “reasonable” serving size is 7 ounces (200 grams) of cooked pasta per person (about 80 grams of dry pasta). At almost half a pound without sauce, this is no side dish. Of course, less should be served to children and smaller people, and more to larger ones. And by all means, eat less to lose weight, but that applies to any food.

## TOMATO SAUCE NIÇOISE

---

This tomato sauce has elements of both the French and Italian Rivas. It can be served with any noodle. I like all pastas but prefer bite-size ones like rotini and farfalle, since they're less likely to flip and have crevices that hold sauce. This is a traditional-style recipe from Nice for what we might think of as spaghetti and tomato sauce, although it has less tomato. This sauce is enough for about 1 pound of dry pasta.

### SERVINGS: 6

- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 3 medium garlic cloves, pressed or finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon marjoram
- 1 small sprig thyme (optional)
- 1½ cups chopped onions
- 3 cups diced very ripe tomatoes, or 1 28-ounce can crushed or diced tomatoes
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- Grated Parmigiano-Reggiano or Parmesan cheese

1. In a medium frying pan heat the olive oil, garlic, marjoram, and thyme, if desired, until the garlic bubbles for about 1 minute. Add the chopped onions and cook until translucent and beginning to brown. Add the tomatoes and cook for 12 to 15 minutes, or until thickened. Season with salt and pepper.
2. Place drained noodles on a plate, top with a layer of sauce, and sprinkle with cheese.

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**OPTIONAL:** This dish can also be topped with fresh basil leaves coarsely chopped or torn (about 1 leaf per serving).

## PESTO SAUCE

---

In most parts of Italy, tomato-based sauces reign supreme, but in Liguria, pesto is king. It is also very popular in Nice and Provence (where it is called pistou). The heart, soul, and essence of this sauce is fresh basil, preferably Genoese basil. According to tradition in the region, there is only one truly superior way to prepare the basil for pesto: by crushing it to a paste in a mortar and pestle. They say this releases all the basil flavor, but there also might be good health-based reasons for the complete breakdown of the basil leaves. I have burned out blenders making pesto, so if you want an alternative to the mortar and pestle, try a food processor. If using the mortar method, you'll need a large one, or reduce the recipe size.

### SERVINGS: 6

- 2 cups fresh basil leaves
- 4 tablespoons fresh pine nuts
- 1 garlic clove, peeled
- Salt to taste
- ½ cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano, or a mix of  
Parmigiano-Reggiano and pecorino sardo
- ⅓ cup extra virgin olive oil

1. Wash and dry the basil leaves. This can be done quickly in a lettuce dryer or spinner. Place the pine nuts, garlic, and salt in the mortar and crush to a paste. Add the basil leaves a small bunch at a time, crushing the entire mixture to a paste. Repeat this process with the cheese. Add olive oil in a few parts and continue crushing to a smooth consistency.
2. If using a food processor, add the washed and dried basil, pine nuts, garlic, salt, and one-third of the oil, and pulse until a coarse paste. Use a spatula to move leaves down from the sides of the processor as needed. Continue this process with another third of the oil. Add the final third of the oil and the cheese, and pulse until the mixture is uniform. Cut basil and pesto oxidize quickly, so cover with plastic wrap if you aren't going to use immediately.
3. Immediately before use, mix the pesto to desired consistency with warm water (you can use water from the boiling pasta). An ideal consis-

tency is thinner than the stock paste, but not so thin as to be runny. Try about a 4 or 5 to 1 ratio of pesto stock to water. Almost any noodle goes well with this sauce.

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**OPTIONAL:** Walnuts can be used instead of pine nuts. The French version, pistou, can be made with the addition of 2 ounces of butter.

## ROASTED TOMATO AND PESTO SAUCE

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This sauce provides a taste of several different Italian regions—but the pine nuts and basil give it a strong northwest Italian accent. The amount of sauce is enough for 10 ounces of dry pasta, for 4 people. Roasting the tomatoes complements the pesto and gives the sauce a rich, deep flavor.

### SERVINGS: 4

- 6 large fresh tomatoes
- 4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, minced or pressed
- 1 teaspoon oregano
- ½ 6-ounce can tomato paste
- 1 15-ounce can diced or crushed tomatoes
- ½ cup dry red wine (Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, etc.)
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup fresh basil leaves
- 2 tablespoons fresh pine nuts
- ½ cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano, or a mix of  
Parmigiano-Reggiano and pecorino sardo
- Salt and black pepper to taste

1. Slice the fresh tomatoes into 4 pieces (slices, not wedges) and place in a single layer in a glass baking dish coated with 2 tablespoons of the olive oil. Roast at 425°F for 30 minutes, turn slices over, and roast an additional 30 minutes.
2. While the tomatoes are roasting, in a large skillet, add onions, garlic, oregano, and remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil, and cook on medium heat about 10 minutes, or until slightly golden. Stir in the tomato paste, canned tomatoes, wine, and water. Finely chop or crush in a mortar the basil and pine nuts, and add to the sauce. Add the cheese. Once the tomatoes are roasted, add them and any remaining juice to the sauce and cook for an additional 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Place drained noodles on a plate and top with a layer of sauce.

## LES GNOCCHI VERTS (RIVIERA GREEN GNOCCHI)

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Gnocchi and Swiss chard are staple foods in the Riviera regions. This recipe from Nice combines them into a single delicious dish.

### SERVINGS: 6

- 3 pounds soft, older medium potatoes
- 1 pound leaves Swiss chard, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3 cups white, non-enriched, unbleached flour
- 2 large eggs
- Grated Parmigiano-Reggiano or Parmesan cheese

1. Peel the potatoes, halve them, and boil in salted water in a large pot for 20 to 25 minutes. While the potatoes cook, in a second pot, blanch the chopped chard leaves in salted boiling water for 5 minutes. Drain the pot and remove residual moisture by stirring the chard on low heat for a couple of minutes, then remove the pan from the heat. While the potatoes are still hot, place them in a large mixing bowl and stir in the olive oil and then the chard, 1 teaspoon salt, and flour. Beat and then add the eggs. At this point, the dough should be firm enough to work with your hands. Fold and knead the dough to ensure uniformity. Roll the dough into rods slightly larger than  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch in diameter, and cut into pieces about an inch long. Cook for 4 to 8 minutes in a large pot of boiling water with a pinch of salt and a small amount of oil. When they float, they are done. Drain the gnocchi well in a colander.

2. Place the drained gnocchi on a plate, top with a layer of sauce (tomato sauce is the Mediterranean preference), and then sprinkle with Parmigiano-Reggiano or Parmesan cheese.

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**OPTIONAL:** Try substituting semolina flour for up to a third of the white flour. This makes the gnocchi more pasta-like. You can also substitute chestnut flour, which is a common variation in Liguria.

## CREAMY ANCHOVY BASIL SAUCE

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This amount of sauce is enough for a pound of dry pasta, for 6 people. It's a Rivieran staple, and the anchovies are a great way to squeeze in an extra serving of omega-3s. It's versatile enough to go with virtually any noodle.

### SERVINGS: 6

- ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 4 garlic cloves, pressed or very finely chopped
- 6 to 8 fresh basil leaves, or 1 tablespoon dried basil
- ½ medium onion, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 2-ounce tin anchovies, mashed with a fork
- 3 tablespoons heavy cream
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- Grated pecorino, Parmigiano-Reggiano,  
or Parmesan cheese

1. In a large frying pan, heat the olive oil, garlic, basil, and onions and cook until the onions become translucent and begin to brown. Stir in the butter, mashed anchovies, and cream. Continue to stir over medium heat for 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.
2. Almost any noodle goes well with this sauce. Top with cheese.



## EGGPLANT TOMATO SAUCE

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This simple but delicious recipe is a great way to sneak in a couple of extra servings of vegetables for picky eaters (and they won't even notice the eggplant!). This amount of sauce is enough for 10 ounces of dry pasta.

### SERVINGS: 4

- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, pressed or minced
- 4 Japanese eggplants, cut into ½-inch cubes or strips
- ½ teaspoon marjoram or oregano
- ¼ cup water, or more if needed
- 3 cups diced very ripe tomatoes, or one 28-ounce can crushed or diced tomatoes
- ¼ cup fresh basil leaves, chopped immediately before use
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- Grated Parmigiano-Reggiano or Parmesan cheese

1. In a large frying pan, heat olive oil, onions, and garlic, and cook until the onions are translucent and beginning to brown. Add the eggplant, marjoram or oregano, and water, and cook on medium heat for about 20 minutes, with occasional stirring, especially near the end. Add the tomatoes and cook another 15 minutes, or until the sauce reaches the desired consistency. Add the basil and cook for an additional 2 minutes while stirring to distribute the basil flavor. Season with salt and pepper.
2. Almost any noodle goes well with this sauce. Top with cheese.

## GREENS AND BEANS PASTA

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Greens are a staple in Mediterranean Riviera regions. If you're feeling adventurous, try swapping out some of the spinach for more traditional greens such as borage, purslane, nettles, dandelion leaves, arugula/rocket, burdock, salsify, and kale. (Try small amounts at first, since some of these are fairly bitter.) This amount of sauce is enough for 1 pound of dry pasta.

### SERVINGS: 6

- 1 pound dry pasta
- $\frac{2}{3}$  cup plus 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 5 garlic cloves, pressed or very finely chopped
- 5 plum tomatoes, diced
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chicken or vegetable broth
- 1 15-ounce can cannellini or northern beans
- 6 cups spinach or 6 leaves Swiss chard, chopped
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1 cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano or Parmesan cheese
- Salt and black pepper to taste

1. In a large pot, cook the pasta according to the manufacturer's directions until al dente. Drain the pasta in a colander, place in a large serving container, coat with  $\frac{2}{3}$  cup olive oil, and let cool. In a large frying pan, heat 2 tablespoons olive oil, the garlic, and tomatoes, and stir occasionally for 4 minutes. Stir in the broth, beans, and spinach or chard, and cook for 5 minutes. Add the cooked pasta to the pan and mix. Stir in the mozzarella cheese and Parmigiano-Reggiano or Parmesan cheese. Season with salt and pepper.
2. Serve with crusty bread and extra virgin olive oil.

## PASTA SALAD

---

This is a Mediterranean classic cold pasta dish. A wide variety of noodles work very well, but select a noodle that has crevices to hold the sauce and flavor. First choices are rotini, farfalle, and fusilli.

### SERVINGS: 6 TO 8

- 1 pound dry pasta
- $\frac{2}{3}$  cup extra virgin olive oil
- 8 large sun-dried tomatoes
- $\frac{1}{2}$  green pepper, thinly sliced
- $\frac{1}{2}$  red pepper, thinly sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped or pressed
- 1 large ripe tomato, diced
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup kalamata or black olives, sliced
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup red wine vinegar (plus additional for rehydrating tomatoes)
- 1 teaspoon marjoram or oregano
- 1 cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano or Parmesan cheese (optional)
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt
- Black pepper to taste

1. In a large pot, cook the pasta according to the manufacturer's directions until al dente. Drain the pasta in a colander, place in a large serving container, coat with the olive oil, and let cool. In a small bowl, rehydrate the sun-dried tomatoes with about 2 volumes of an equal mixture of water and red wine vinegar, and let stand for 6 to 8 minutes. Once the tomatoes are soft, chop into  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch pieces. Mix the chopped tomatoes and all the remaining ingredients together with the pasta.
2. Spoon onto a plate with a side garnish of parsley. On a hot summer day, serve with a mint iced tea.

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**OPTIONAL:** Without cheese, this dish is vegan. Try it with feta cheese, in addition to or instead of the Parmigiano-Reggiano. For more veggies, add a couple of sautéed zucchini. Also try chopped capers, which add another layer of complexity to this amazing dish!

## READY RICE

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This should be prepared in medium to large batches and stored in the refrigerator. I prefer a mix of about  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{2}{3}$  Japonica rice and  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{1}{3}$  long-grain rice (generally parboiled). This mix is still slightly sticky, but it doesn't clump like Japonica alone, especially when stored in the refrigerator.

### SERVINGS: VARIABLE

3 cups uncooked rice (2 cups Japonica,  
1 cup long-grain parboiled)

1. This rice can be prepared in a rice cooker, in the microwave, or on the stovetop. For microwave preparation, add the rice to a suitable lidded container, wash the rice several times, and then add water to the fill line equal to three volumes of the rice (for example, if you use 1 cup of rice, then add water to the 3-cup fill line). Slightly less water makes for a drier rice. Microwave the container on maximum power until the water begins to boil (record the amount of time for future preparation). Let stand for about 10 minutes, stir the rice up from the bottom of the container, then heat the container another 1 to 2 minutes in the microwave.
2. For stovetop preparation, add the rice and rinse several times with water. Drain as much of the rinse water as possible, add 1 to 1.5 volumes of fresh water (more water makes for softer and stickier rice), and bring to a boil. Turn down heat to low, cover, and simmer for 20 to 25 minutes (depending on the type of rice). Stir the rice, replace the lid, and let cool for at least 15 minutes.
3. This rice can be eaten alone, or paired with many side dishes and entrées.

## HERBED RICE

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This rice can be used as an alternative to plain rice and eaten with sauces and vegetable dishes.

**SERVINGS: 4**

- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 teaspoons thyme, fresh rosemary, or marjoram
- ¼ cup water
- 3 cups precooked rice

1. In a large frying pan, heat the olive oil to medium heat, place the bay leaves on the oil, and add the thyme, rosemary, or marjoram and water. Add the rice, stir well, and cover. After 10 minutes, stir and remove from the heat. The bay leaves can be left in the rice, but do not serve.
2. This rice can be eaten alone, or paired with many side dishes and entrées.

## RICE WITH FAVA BEANS

---

This classic rice dish from Nice is an outstanding side dish, or even a main course for a delicious and filling lunch. The recipe contains a small amount of petit salé or bacon for flavor, but it can be made vegetarian by simply omitting the meat. The fava beans are so deliciously rich you'll hardly notice its absence.

### SERVINGS: 4

- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- 2 ounces petit salé or bacon, diced
- 1 cup vegetable or chicken broth
- 1 20-ounce can fava beans, drained
- 4 leaves Swiss chard, chopped (optional)
- 3 cups precooked rice
- 1 tablespoon butter
- Salt and black pepper to taste

In a large skillet heat the olive oil to medium heat, add the onions, garlic, and diced petit salé or bacon, and cook until golden brown. Add the broth, beans, and chard, if desired, and cook with occasional stirring over medium-low heat for 15 minutes, or until most of the moisture has been cooked off. Add the rice and butter, mix well, and cook until the rice is hot. Season with salt and pepper.

## RICE SALAD NIÇOISE

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This classic rice dish from Nice is an outstanding side dish, or even a main course for a quick lunch.

### SERVINGS: 4

- 7 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1½ cups rice
- ¾ cup water
- 5 large tomatoes, or 1 28-ounce can diced or crushed tomatoes
- 1 cup frozen small green peas
- 1 green pepper, thinly sliced
- 1 tablespoon vinegar
- ½ teaspoon marjoram or oregano
- ½ teaspoon salt
- Black pepper to taste
- 2 ounces pitted olives
- 4 spring onions
- 1 tablespoon homemade ketchup (optional; see recipe on p. 242)
- 1 sprig mint

1. In a medium saucepan, heat 4 tablespoons of the olive oil to medium heat. Add the rice and stir well to coat the rice completely with oil. After the rice turns milky white, add the water, stir, cover, and cook on low heat for 20 minutes. Stir the rice, cover, and let sit an additional 5 minutes. In another saucepan, place the tomatoes over low heat and simmer until reduced by about half, then add the peas and green pepper and simmer, stirring, for an additional 5 minutes. In a small mixing bowl, mix the remaining 3 tablespoons olive oil, vinegar, marjoram or oregano, salt, black pepper, and ketchup, if desired. Slice the olives and onions, and mix them in a large salad bowl with the cooled tomato, the rice, and the dressing.
2. Top with mint sprig.

## FISH, MEAT, AND TOFU

**I** CAN'T STRESS ENOUGH THAT MINIMIZING RED MEAT IN your diet is a key to maximizing mindspan, especially in the second half of life. Whenever possible, replace red meat with tofu or moderate servings of fish.



## MEDITERRANEAN ROLLED FISH

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Fish is an exceptional source of low-iron protein and very long chain omega-3 fatty acids, which is why I recommend featuring it on the menu at least two to three times a week. This recipe is a particular favorite of mine because it's simple and easy to whip together even after a long day at work. Just be careful to check where your fish is from and whether it is endangered.

### SERVINGS: 2

1 tablespoon olive oil  
Four 2- to 3-ounce fish fillets (tilapia or flounder are good choices)  
2 scallions, minced or diced  
4 ounces spinach, fresh or frozen (defrosted and drained)  
2 garlic cloves, pressed or diced  
2 teaspoons basil, marjoram, and/or thyme  
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce  
Dash of salt and black pepper  
2 ounces feta cheese, grated  
2 ripe lemons  
Paprika

1. Moderately heat the olive oil in a small pan. Rinse the fish fillets under warm water and place in pan. In a small mixing bowl, mix the scallions, spinach, garlic, herbs, Worcestershire sauce, salt, and pepper and add feta cheese. Spread the mixture over the fillets and roll lengthwise. Squeeze 1 lemon over the rolled fillets and sprinkle with paprika. Bake at 400°F for 40 minutes covered.
2. Let cool a bit. Cut the remaining lemon into wedges. Serve two fish rolls on a plate with a lemon wedge on the side. You can place the fish over 2 to 3 heaping tablespoons of prepared rice. A simple side green vegetable goes nicely. Try steamed asparagus spears topped with lemon juice.

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**OPTIONAL:** Add a side salad: lettuce and sliced fresh tomatoes, topped with a sprinkle of grated cheese (fresh asiago or fontina) and a fresh basil leaf, and dressed with a garlic vinaigrette.

## GRILLED SALMON

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This is a flavorful East meets West salmon dish. Salmon is fairly low in iron and rich in EPA and DHA very long chain fatty acids.

### SERVINGS: 4

- 3 tablespoons light olive oil
- 1 scallion, chopped
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon vinegar
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- Dash of crushed red pepper flakes
- One 14-ounce fresh salmon fillet

1. In a small bowl, mix 2 tablespoons of the light olive oil, scallions, soy sauce, vinegar, brown sugar, and red pepper flakes until the brown sugar has dissolved. Pour the marinade into a sealable plastic bag. Wash the salmon, place in the bag, and marinate for 2 to 4 hours. Take out of the refrigerator about 30 minutes prior to cooking, to allow the salmon to come to room temperature. Heat the remaining 1 tablespoon light olive oil in a large skillet until it begins to bubble or smoke faintly, then place the salmon in the pan. Cook for 5 to 6 minutes, spoon over the fillet about 1 teaspoon of the marinade, then turn with a spatula and cook for another 4 minutes, or until the thinner parts of the fillet begin to flake. Allow to rest in the pan 1 to 2 minutes.
2. Serve with a couple of generous sides of vegetables (steamed asparagus or broccoli go very well) and rice or pasta.

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**OPTIONAL:** This recipe is spectacular on the grill. Be careful as the salmon nears the finish line, as it can flake at the edges and fall into the grill. To avoid this problem, you can place a piece of foil on the grill and move the salmon onto it for the final 2 to 3 minutes of cooking.

## SAGE ROASTED CHICKEN

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Historically, meat is not eaten in large portions by the Mediterranean Mindspan Elite, but various kinds of meat stuffed or rubbed with sage are favorites. Fresh sage has a special flavor that fades as it dries, so always try to use fresh sage whenever possible.

### SERVINGS: 4 TO 6

One 2½- to 3-pound chicken, cut into pieces (breasts, thighs, drumsticks, wings)  
10 to 12 leaves fresh sage, washed and dried  
1 tablespoon light olive oil  
1 teaspoon thyme

1. You can either buy a cut chicken or have your butcher cut the chicken into pieces. Lift the skin away from the meat without tearing or removing it and insert enough sage leaves to cover about half to two-thirds of the meat. Pull the skin back into place to seal in the sage. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Add olive oil to a glass baking dish large enough to hold all the chicken pieces. Roll the chicken pieces in the dish to coat with oil, and place the pieces skin side down in the dish. Sprinkle with about half the thyme. Bake for 45 minutes. Turn the pieces over, sprinkle with the remaining thyme, and bake for an additional 20 minutes. The top should be golden and crispy, and the juices should run clear.
2. Serve with rice or potatoes.

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**OPTIONAL:** Pork loin or chops can be used instead of chicken. Buy thicker cuts, cut a slit deep into the side, and roast or panfry. This dish goes very well with applesauce and green beans.

## EAST OF EASY CURRY

---

Curry is common in Okinawa.

**SERVINGS: 4**

- ¾ pound chicken breasts, boneless and skinless, cut into ½-inch cubes or ¼-inch strips
- 2 teaspoons soy sauce
- 3½ teaspoons curry powder
- 3 tablespoons canola oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 medium red bell pepper, cut into thin slices
- 1 cup fresh peapods or frozen peas
- 1 medium apple, chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon very finely chopped or grated gingerroot
- 1½ cups low-sodium vegetable or chicken broth
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- ¼ cup low-fat sour cream

1. In a medium bowl, coat the chicken with soy sauce, then add 1½ teaspoons of the curry powder and coat all pieces. In a wok or large skillet on medium heat, add 1 tablespoon of the canola oil, and when the oil begins to smoke, add the chicken and stir-fry for 3 minutes; then remove from pan and set aside. Add the remaining 2 tablespoons oil, onions, red pepper, and peapods or frozen peas to the pan, and stir-fry for 6 minutes, or until the onions are golden and translucent. Add the apple, garlic, ginger, and remaining 2 teaspoons curry powder to the pan, and stir-fry for 2 minutes. Reduce heat. In a small mixing bowl, with a fork or whisk, mix the broth and cornstarch until there are no clumps. Add the mixture to the pan, stir to mix all ingredients, increase heat to a boil, and then reduce to medium heat and stir and cook for 5 minutes. Stir in the chicken and sour cream and cook for 5 minutes on medium-low heat.
2. Serve over a bed of rice, or with rice on the side.

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**OPTIONAL:** Tofu can be used for a vegetarian option, or pork loin strips can be used instead of chicken.

## OKINAWAN KIMCHI PORK

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This recipe is made with kimchi, a favorite fermented food in many Asian countries, including Japan. It's a typical Okinawan chanpuru (stir-fry), and it is a great dish even without the pork. I suggest you purchase kimchi, rather than make it yourself, but watch the salt, and make sure it is fermented rather than just salted. Some brands, like Mother-in-Law's, say on the jar that they are fermented. Be careful, this stuff is spicy! If it is too hot for your palate, cook some napa, or Chinese, cabbage and mix it with the kimchi before adding to the recipe. See the recipe options for how to do this.

### SERVINGS: 4

- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 6 ounces pork, cut into strips  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch thick and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches long
- 8 ounces firm tofu, diced or shredded into  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch pieces
- $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups kimchi (or mix with napa cabbage)
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 6 eggs, lightly beaten

1. Add canola oil to a wok or large skillet on medium-high heat. Once the pan is hot, add onions and stir-fry for 2 minutes. Add pork and stir-fry until it is browned through. Add tofu and stir-fry another 2 minutes, then add kimchi and soy sauce and mix well. Pour eggs over the top and allow to cook until mostly set. Stir gently to finish cooking the eggs and then serve hot.
2. This dish goes perfectly with a bit of rice. Serve with about  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup cooked rice per person.

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**OPTIONAL:** If the kimchi is too spicy, mix it with steamed or boiled napa, or Chinese, cabbage. To do this, simply wash, chop, and steam or boil the cabbage for 5 minutes prior to use.

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**NON-MEAT OPTION:** Try this dish without the pork. In this variation the kimchi and egg flavor shine through.

## DESSERTS

**D**SSERTS AREN'T TRADITIONALLY A MAJOR DIETARY feature among the Mindspan Elite, who are more likely to opt for flavorful coffee, tea, and/or fresh fruit. But if you still want to soothe your sweet tooth, try one of these options.

## SARDINIAN SEMOLINA PUDDING

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This is a classic Sardinian dish. Semolina is made from durum wheat, which gives foods a low glycemic index. The cream and optional egg further lower the glycemic index.

### SERVINGS: 4

- 1½ cups water
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¾ cup coarsely ground semolina

Pour water and cream into a medium saucepan, place over medium heat, and add sugar and salt. When the liquid boils, gradually stir or whisk in all of the semolina. Cook while stirring until the mixture thickens, which should take 8 to 10 minutes. Let the pudding cool to room temperature, or refrigerate to enhance formation of resistant starch. Re-warm to eat, but if you cook until hot, let it return to a warm temperature before eating.

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**NONVEGETARIAN OPTION:** One egg can be stirred into the cooled pudding. Stir the egg in completely, and reheat until very hot. Let cool until warm before eating.

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**IDEAL OPTION:** Top with a bit of fruit or berry sauce or preserves. Here is one recipe for a delicious berry sauce.

### *Berry Sauce*

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- ¼ cup unsweetened orange juice
- 1 pint blueberries, blackberries, or raspberries
- Up to 2 tablespoons sugar (optional)

To prepare the sauce, mix the orange juice, berries, and sugar, if desired, in a small saucepan. Bring to a light boil while stirring over medium heat. Reduce heat and simmer, stirring occasionally for 15 to 20 minutes, or until the berries have disintegrated. Allow to cool until warm, and then spoon over the pudding.



## DARKBERRY DIPS

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This recipe is an excellent way to get a dose of dark chocolate, one of my—and the entire world’s—favorite saturated fats.

### SERVINGS: 4

Dash vanilla, mint, or almond extract  
12 to 14 medium-large strawberries, or about  
40 raspberries

### DIPPING CHOCOLATE

About 4 ounces 70% to 85% dark chocolate  
2 teaspoons heavy cream  
*or*  
3 squares (3 ounces) unsweetened baking chocolate  
2 teaspoons heavy cream  
1 level tablespoon sugar

1. In a small coffee cup combine ingredients for the dipping chocolate and heat in microwave on medium power for about 40 seconds, or until the chocolate melts. Add the flavor extract and stir until cooler and thicker but still liquid. If using strawberries, hold each berry by the stem. Dip in chocolate until almost covered, remove excess, and then place on a plate covered with plastic wrap or waxed paper. If using raspberries, drizzle chocolate over berries placed on plastic wrap or waxed paper. Put in freezer for about 10 minutes until the chocolate hardens.
2. Serve on the chilled plate with a few mint leaves.

## SNACKS

**M**OST MINDSPAN ELITE DON'T SNACK MUCH OR AT all, but if you are running low on fuel, here are some simple, healthful snacks.

### *Pickled Herring or Sardines on a Cracker*

Pickled herring is a fantastic snack, as are canned sardines (in water or olive oil). Eat up to 4 pieces of herring or 2 medium sardines for a snack. As always, select a cracker free of added iron.

### *Veggies and Vinaigrette or Nut Butter*

Slice some carrots and celery and dip them in vinaigrette dressing, or coat them with almond or peanut butter.

### *A Handful of Nuts*

Nuts are an excellent and healthful snack. Macadamia nuts, pecans, walnuts, and almonds are all top choices. Roasted soybeans and peanuts aren't actually nuts, but are also good snacks.

*Sourdough Bread with Cheese and Apples*

Pair 3 or 4 small pieces of sourdough bread with an ounce of goat cheese, fontina, asiago, or Brie. (All are excellent choices, but feel free to try others.) Add half a sliced apple. The fat and protein in the cheese blunt the tartness of the apple and contribute to a heavenly combination.

## BREADS AND FOCACCIA

Many breads presented in this section are made most easily with a bread machine, although they usually are not as authentic or quite as nicely textured as oven-baked breads. To make a chewier bread, use starter rather than yeast, add gluten, and/or replace some of the flour with semolina flour starter. Adding gluten can also give a higher rise. Try adding 1 teaspoon gluten flour and 1 teaspoon water to any bread recipe to improve the texture. Adding vegetables like pumpkin or zucchini can also increase firmness. The dough of the focaccia can be made in a bread machine, but it is baked in an oven. Focaccia and tarts (torte) are common in Ligurian cuisine, and can be found with many kinds of stuffing or toppings.

When working with dough on a countertop, prevent sticking by first sprinkling flour onto the surface. To shape a loaf prior to placing it on a cooking sheet, first wet the work surface with a bit of water or a damp sponge, then place a large piece of plastic wrap on the surface. Then flour the surface of the plastic wrap prior to placing the dough on it. This allows you to transfer a formed loaf to a baking pan. This technique works very well with the rustic loaf or rustic sourdough recipe.

## FERMENTATION THROUGHOUT THE AGES

Breads and alcohols have been made and consumed for millennia. Written histories of ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia describe bread-making essentials. The first time breads and alcohols were produced was almost certainly accidental, but inevitable, since yeasts—the microscopic fungi that produce ethanol and the carbon dioxide bubbles in bread—are ubiquitous and even float through the air. Around 1500 B.C. chance became less of a factor through the use of fermentation “starters.” But it wasn’t until the mid-nineteenth century that Louis Pasteur discovered that microbes were responsible for food and alcohol fermentation. By the late nineteenth century, yeasts had been isolated and pure yeast strains began to be used in the production of various alcohols and breads.

It took until the middle of the twentieth century for industrial breadmaking to largely supplant traditional breads throughout most parts of developed nations. But some Mediterranean backwaters were more resistant to the change. Traditional breads are made with non-sour starter cultures or pre-ferments (poolish, biga, levain, etc.) that promote the growth of bacteria during pre-fermentation. Most bacteria grow much faster than yeast, and so even a small starting amount of bacteria can expand very rapidly and contribute to the overall quality of the dough. The range of tartness of traditional starter-based breads—from unnoticeable to noticeably tart—is due to lactic acid produced by lactobacillus bacteria, which are symbiotic to the yeasts that produce carbon dioxide and cause dough to rise. Even in the absence of tart lactic acid, the many rich and varied flavors of traditional breads come partly from the products of both bacterial and yeast fermentation.

## BASIC SOURDOUGH SEMOLINA BREAD

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### YIELD: 2-POUND LOAF

- 1 cup water
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- About 1 cup sourdough starter (see p. 240)
- 2¼ cups white, non-enriched flour
- 1 cup ground semolina flour (not iron-enriched)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon butter or oil

Put water in a microwave-safe container and heat for 30 seconds at high power in a microwave oven (until warm but not hot to the touch). Transfer to the bread machine pan. Add other ingredients in the order presented (make sure starter does not contact salt or butter or oil). Bake using the standard bread machine program for a 2-pound loaf.

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**OPTIONAL:** Other flours can be added instead of the semolina.

## PUMPKIN SEMOLINA BREAD

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### YIELD: 2-POUND LOAF

- 1 15-ounce can pumpkin, or 1½ cups roasted fresh pumpkin
- ½ cup water
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon butter or oil
- 3 cups white, non-enriched flour
- 1 cup ground semolina flour (not iron-enriched)
- 2 teaspoons yeast, or ½ cup starter (see p. 240)

Mix pumpkin and water in a small microwave-safe container and heat for 60 seconds at high power in a microwave oven (until warm but not hot to the touch). Transfer to the bread machine pan. Add other ingredients in the order presented. (Make sure the yeast doesn't contact the salt or butter or oil.) Bake using the standard bread machine program for a 2-pound loaf.

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**OPTIONAL:** Add 1 cup rehydrated dried and sweetened cranberries.

To prepare the cranberries, put ¾ cup cranberries and 1 teaspoon water in a microwave-safe container and microwave on high or medium heat for 90 seconds, or until hot. Let stand for 5 minutes and then add to bread machine pan.

You can use a higher proportion of semolina flour (up to three-fourths).

## BASIC FOCACCIA

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Focaccia is *the* classic Italian bread. In Liguria and across most of Italy, it is a staple, snack, and fast food.

### YIELD: 1 LOAF

- 3 cups white, non-enriched flour
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 cup water
- 1 teaspoon yeast
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

1. Mix the flour and salt together in a medium mixing bowl. Heat the water until warm (about 90°F). Add the yeast to the water and let stand a few minutes to rehydrate the yeast. Add the yeast water to the flour and salt mixture and mix, then add the olive oil and continue to mix well with a sturdy spatula or spoon. If the mixture appears dry, add a small amount of water. Continue mixing until uniform.
2. Coat the palms of your hands with flour prior to handling the dough. Knead the dough on a floured flat work surface until the dough is firm and pliable. Put the dough ball into a medium or large bowl lightly coated with olive oil and cover with a kitchen towel. Let the dough rise in the bowl for 2 hours, or place in a refrigerator and let it rise overnight.
3. Shape the dough into an oblong shape slightly smaller than the size of a rectangular loaf pan and flatten with a rolling pin. Lightly oil the pan and then place the dough in the pan. Cover with a towel and let rest for 45 minutes. At the end of 45 minutes, preheat oven to 450°F. When the oven is at temperature, brush the top of the loaf lightly with olive oil and sprinkle with a pinch of salt. Carefully place the loaf in the oven and bake it for 20 to 25 minutes. Let cool on a wire rack.

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**OPTIONAL:** Add chopped olives to the dough, or caramelized onions to the top of the loaf.



## RUSTIC LOAF OR RUSTIC SOURDOUGH

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### YIELD: 2-POUND LOAF

2½ cups white, non-enriched, unbleached flour  
½ teaspoon yeast (for sourdough, replace the yeast  
and ½ cup flour with 1 cup starter, p. 240)  
1½ cups semolina flour (not iron-enriched)  
2 cups water  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
1½ teaspoons salt  
Coarse semolina or cornmeal

1. Place the flour and yeast (or sourdough starter) in a large mixing bowl and mix together well. Add the semolina, water, olive oil, and salt and mix with a heavy spatula or spoon until all the ingredients are uniformly mixed. Cover the bowl with aluminum foil, place in a cool location (away from heaters or sunny windows), and let rise for 12 hours.
2. Shape the dough into a loaf about 12 inches long, and place on a baking sheet lightly greased with light olive oil (if you are using a nonstick baking sheet, the olive oil can be omitted), and lightly coated with coarse semolina or cornmeal. Sprinkle semolina or white flour over the top and lightly rub over the surface of the dough, drape a kitchen towel over the loaf, and let rise for 1½ to 2 hours. Bake for 30 to 40 minutes until the loaf is golden and gives a resonant thump when tapped firmly.

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**OPTIONAL:** For an onion herb loaf, add ¾ cup cooked onions, 1 teaspoon oregano, 1 teaspoon thyme, and 1 teaspoon rosemary to the dry ingredients prior to mixing.

## HOMEMADE STAPLES

SOME OF THE MINDSPAN DIET RECIPES REQUIRE SELECT ingredients that are important for maximizing mindspan. There are no substitutes. I make my own breads and I suggest you do the same. Bread machines make the process almost automatic. Certain vegetables enhance both the flavor and texture of breads, and the only way to have bread exactly as you want it is to make it yourself. I also make my own pickles. Both are so good I prefer them to any commercial alternative.

I include milk and buttermilk substitutes for lactose digesters (made from sour cream or cream). If you're able to digest lactose, you unfortunately absorb additional carb calories in the form of the highly reactive sugar galactose. If you cannot digest lactose, count yourself lucky and consume milk or buttermilk and lactose-containing dairy in moderation. Do not use lactose-reduced milk (such as Lactaid), since this predigests lactose, releases the harmful galactose, and deprives you of the benefits of the increased feeding of your microbiome. People who have high LDL cholesterol (above 130 mg/dL) should use reduced-fat sour cream or skip this staple altogether and opt for soy milk or another option with low saturated animal fat.

For those able to digest lactose, sour cream has at least three

benefits relative to milk or buttermilk: low lactose, less methionine, and the X factor lactic acid. Use full-fat sour cream. Do not use nonfat sour cream (this concoction has nothing to do with cream). If you use reduced-fat sour cream, make sure it has low carbohydrate and protein amounts, proportional to full-fat varieties (check the nutrition labels).

Sour cream milk substitute is very easy to make. For a lighter blend similar to skim milk, just add 2 tablespoons of sour cream per cup of water in a mixing bowl or container with a screw-on lid, and either mix or shake until the sour cream is completely dispersed. For a creamier blend, more similar to whole milk or buttermilk, use 4 tablespoons of sour cream per cup of water. You can also add ½ teaspoon of sugar per cup to counter the tartness of the lactic acid. If you want to replicate the full X factor effects of milk, you can even add inulin, lactulose, or fructooligosaccharides, up to about 10 grams per cup.

This milk substitute works great for granola and other breakfast cereals. It isn't as good for coffee or tea, but you can use cream instead of sour cream for these. It also doesn't work in recipes that require protein from milk. For such recipes, add one large egg per cup of sour cream milk substitute.

## HOMEMADE SOURDOUGH STARTER

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You can make sourdough starter at home with nothing but flour, water, and time. Add about 2 ounces unbleached or whole wheat flour to 2 ounces of clean, low-chlorine water. Stir well until there is no dry flour remaining. Place in a location where the temperature will remain 68° to 90°F. Split starter, and renew every day with an equal amount of flour and water. After five days, your starter is ready to use! Try adding about 1 cup of starter per recipe. If you are using a bread machine, it might require a slow rise or customizable cycle, but give your machine a try! The worst that can happen is that you'll get a low-rise but still flavorful loaf. If the conditions in your area aren't producing suitable results, consider a commercial sourdough starter, many of which can be found online.

## HOMEMADE PICKLING BRINE

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This recipe works with cucumbers and most other vegetables. You should use about an equal amount of brine and vegetables.

- 2 cups water
- 1¾ cups white vinegar
- 1 cup chopped fresh or frozen dill
- ½ cup sugar
- 1½ tablespoons salt
- 1½ tablespoons brown mustard
- 1 tablespoon commercial pickling spice
- 8 garlic cloves, chopped
- ½ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes

Mix all of the ingredients in a large mixing bowl or a pickling container that will hold at least 10 cups. If you plan to fill multiple smaller containers (glass jar, sealable plastic, etc.), after preparing the brine, fill the containers about halfway, then add the vegetables. Refrigerate for at least 1 week, and preferably longer. After 2 months in the brine, some softer vegetables, like cucumbers, lose their crispness.

## HOMEMADE KETCHUP

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**YIELD: JUST UNDER 1 1/2 CUPS**

- 1 6-ounce can tomato paste
- ¼ cup sugar
- ½ cup white vinegar or flavored vinegar  
of your choice
- ¼ cup water
- ¼ teaspoon onion powder
- ¼ teaspoon or less garlic powder

1. Combine all ingredients in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Whisk until smooth. When the mixture comes to a boil, reduce heat to low and simmer for 15 minutes, stirring often.
2. Remove pan from heat and cover until cool. Chill and store in a covered container.

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**OPTIONAL:** Using brown sugar rather than white will result in a flavor more like barbecue sauce. Other flavors you can add for variations on barbecue sauce: pineapple juice, smoke flavor, molasses, garlic, and tamarind.