

BETTER LUNCH BOX

RECIPES

FOR EASIER LUNCH PACKING



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FOR *easier* LUNCH PACKING



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Introduction

Children spend a large portion of their day at school. Making healthy food choices while at school is important and can have an impact on a child's overall health and well-being. However, our research shows that children don't eat enough vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and healthy protein foods on school days.

Let's be honest here: lunch-packing is not always our favourite task as parents. We often face multiple challenges when trying to pack a healthy lunch box, ranging from lack of ideas to limited time, picky eaters and food waste, school food allergy policies, food safety, and rising food costs.

In response to these challenges, our team developed 15 Better Lunch Box recipes to make life easier and help you enjoy packing tasty lunches. These are guaranteed to meet the discerning taste buds of picky eaters and get your kids excited about lunch time.

In the first part of this book, we share our best tips as dietitians (and parents) for easy lunch planning and preparation. We also provide you with practical ways of



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A nourishing lunch box full of fresh foods gives your child energy to play, concentrate, and learn all day.

getting the kids involved in lunch packing and how to deal with picky eaters. Finally, we provide you with an overview of food safety tips. The second portion provides you with 15 recipes designed to get your family excited about preparing healthy and tasty lunches.

From our kitchen to yours—enjoy!

Acknowledgments

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ALL ABOUT HEALTHY LUNCHES



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Why It's Important

- ✓ A lunch box full of whole foods (vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and protein foods) gives your child energy to play, concentrate, and learn all day. These foods are a major source of the essential vitamins and minerals children need to learn, grow, and develop.
- ✓ Learning to enjoy a variety of foods takes time and practice. Lunchtime is an opportunity for your child to build their food skills and curiosity with food and above all... develop a positive relationship with food.
- ✓ Your child setting an example can encourage other kids to make healthy choices too.

What to Pack? The Rule of Four

Try to pack at least one food from each of the four groups below

1 Fruit: raw & cut up, frozen or cooked (e.g., applesauce, frozen or fresh berries, melon).

2 Vegetables: raw veggies (cut up), leafy greens, cooked vegetables, vegetable soup.

3 Protein-rich foods: leftover meat, poultry or fish, eggs, yogurt, milk, cheese, beans and lentils, tofu.

4 Whole grain foods: whole grain breads, pasta, tortilla, pita, naan, crackers, brown rice, quinoa, barley.



Don't forget the water! Include a reusable bottle so they can fill it up throughout the day.



Photo: iStock.com/filmstudio

Setting Up Your Family for Success: Lunch Prep Made Easy!

During hectic weekday schedules, meal prep or meal planning is a great tool for busy families to stay on track.

Lunch planning tips

- Let your child choose what to pack among a range of nourishing foods. Your child is more likely to eat foods they have chosen themselves.
- Collect and flag favourite recipes to try and incorporate in your child's lunch box (this cookbook is a great place to start!).
- Last night's dinner makes a great lunch tomorrow! See if you can make extra of any dinner recipes for leftovers the next day.
- Psst—the [Teriyaki Chicken on page 37](#) is a quick and easy dinner that makes great leftovers!
- Start small: aim to prep enough lunches for two to three days of the week.

Getting started

- When shopping for food, keep in mind that having nutritious food on hand will make it easier to pack nourishing lunches.

- Set aside some time each week to plan lunch menu ideas, write out the grocery list, and shop. Make sure to inspect your fridge and pantry when meal planning to see what foods you can use up.
- Choose a time in the week for lunch box “food prep,” i.e., consider preparing some staple foods that your children enjoy. Good examples are hard-boiled eggs, cut-up fruits and vegetables, rice and beans, etc.
- Make extra portions for another couple days of meals, or to freeze for use in the future. Make sure you label and date what goes in the freezer so you can easily know what you have on hand or use clear containers, so you don't forget your leftovers.
- Try cooking a big batch of the [Bean and Chicken Pilaf \(page 13\)](#) or the [Greek Chickpea and Orzo Salad \(page 23\)](#).
- Timing is everything: Take advantage of after-dinner time when food is already out, and your kitchen is already a mess to pack lunches for the next day. Packing the night before can also give your child the time to choose carefully and get involved with lunch packing.

How to Get Your Kids Involved in Packing Lunches

Involving your kids in planning and packing their own lunches for school can help improve their food skills, get them to try new foods, make them feel a part of the process, and decrease the amount of food that comes home uneaten. The more kids are involved, the more likely they are going to be excited about what they'll eat.

Here are some practical ways your kids can get involved with packing lunches

- Get them to pick out a vegetable at the grocery store to include in lunches ("do you prefer raw carrots or pepper sticks?").
- Get them to help you wash and slice fruits and vegetables.
- Ask for their help when putting the different foods in their lunchbox.
- Give your kids accountability with their lunchbox both when packing and when it comes home at the end of the day. Ask your kids to dispose food that is spoiled and clean their lunchbox containers.



REMEMBER

Lunches don't have to be picture perfect or Pinterest-worthy. If your child wants to eat the same thing for lunch most days, that's alright! In fact, sending the same food items often (even daily) is okay. In other words, simplicity is ok (phew!).

Lunch Packing Tips for Picky Eaters

Kids sometimes complain about having too much or too little food in their lunch. Sometimes they barely eat at all. If this happens, try asking them about why they avoid some items in the lunchbox. It could be that they didn't have enough time to eat, had trouble opening the packaging, or they were simply less hungry.



Photo: iStock.com/PeopleImages

Here are some additional ideas

- Include colourful fruits and vegetables. Fun colours may entice them to take a bite!
- Mix things up. Go beyond the sandwich and try rolls, wraps, and leftovers.
- A few changes in preparation and packaging can encourage kids to try new foods. Making food easier (bite-sized) or more fun to eat is key!
- Take time trying new foods. Try adding a small amount of a new food to their lunchbox and reintroduce it on and off to see if they grow to like it. Important: don't pressure your child to eat foods they don't like! It may take many, many times to get a child to like a new food.
- Praise your child for eating new foods but stay neutral if they don't eat it. Your child won't love everything you send... and that's ok too!

Keeping Food Fresh and Safe

Wash:

- Hands, utensils, and work area.
- Vegetables and fruits before packing.
- Lunchboxes and kits
Have your child empty and wash their lunch box and any beverage containers as soon as they get home from school with hot, soapy water.

Keep hot foods hot!

- Pour boiling hot water into thermos and let sit for a couple of minutes.
- Heat hot food to steaming hot.
- Pour boiling water out of thermos and then transfer hot food. Seal.

Keep cold foods cold!

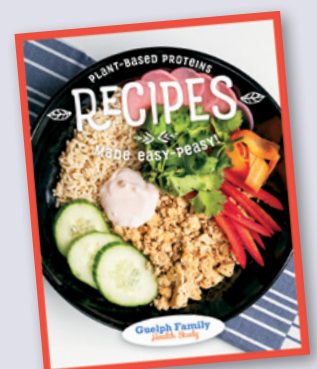
- Use an insulated lunch bag.
- Pack an ice pack to keep foods cold until ready to be eaten.
- Pack lunches the night before and store in the fridge overnight so that it is cold and ready to go.

More storage tips

- Safely storing prepared food is an important step to successful meal planning. Label all items with the date so you can track when to use by. Rotate stored items so that the oldest foods are at the front.
- Keep the most perishable foods like greens, herbs, and chopped fruits at eye level so you don't forget about them.
- Cooked meals tend to freeze well in airtight containers. To save time, when freezing food, be sure to freeze in individual portions so that foods can thaw quickly.

GET ALL THE FREE FAMILY-FRIENDLY COOKBOOKS!

To download and view for free on your phone or tablet, go to guelphfamilyhealthstudy.com/cookbooks



part TWO
RECIPES

BBQ CHICKEN SLIDERS

with Apple and Cabbage Slaw



BBQ Chicken Sliders with Apple and Cabbage Slaw



SERVINGS



PREP TIME



COOK TIME

Ingredients

2 lbs	(900 g)	Chicken thighs, boneless and skinless
1 tsp	(5 mL)	Salt
1 tbsp	(15 mL)	Garlic powder
½ tsp	(2 mL)	Cumin
2 tsp	(10 mL)	Paprika
2 tsp	(10 mL)	Onion powder
½ cup	(125 mL)	BBQ sauce

Slaw

1 cup	(250 mL)	Cabbage, shredded
½ cup	(125 mL)	Carrot, grated
1 each		Green apple, julienne
2 tbsp	(30 mL)	Apple cider vinegar
1 tbsp	(15 mL)	Lemon juice
½ tsp	(2 mL)	Salt
24 each		Slider buns

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (176°C).
2. In a large oven safe baking dish, toss chicken with 1 tsp (5 mL) salt, garlic powder, cumin, paprika, and onion powder.
3. Cover with aluminum foil and roast in the oven for 30- 35 minutes until chicken is tender and an inserted thermometer reads 165°F (74°C).
4. Using two forks, shred chicken by pulling apart into smaller pieces. Stir in BBQ sauce. Set aside.
5. In a medium bowl, toss together shredded cabbage, carrot, and apple.
6. Add apple cider vinegar, lemon juice, and salt to the cabbage and mix well.
7. Top each slider bun with ¼ cup (60 mL) chicken and 2 tbsp (30 mL) of slaw.



CHEF'S TIPS

- This is a great recipe for large batch cooking. Freeze leftovers for quick meals.
- For a change, swap the chicken for pork and serve with pineapple chunks.
- Use a slow cooker for hassle free cooking.



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BEAN AND CHICKEN PILAF



Bean and Chicken Pilaf



SERVINGS



PREP TIME



COOK TIME

Ingredients

4 each	Chicken thighs, diced
¼ tsp (1 mL)	Cayenne pepper
¾ tsp (4 mL)	Smoked paprika
2 tsp (10 mL)	Salt
½ tsp (2 mL)	Black pepper
2 tbsp (30 mL)	Vegetable oil
1 each	Onion, chopped
3 cloves	Garlic, minced
1 ½ cup (375 mL)	Diced tomatoes, canned, drained
1 can	Black beans, drained and rinsed
2 each	Bay leaves
1 ½ cup (375 mL)	Rice
2 ½ cups (625 mL)	Chicken broth

Instructions

1. Place chicken in small bowl and season with cayenne pepper, smoked paprika, salt, and black pepper. Set aside.
2. In a large pot, heat oil over medium heat.
3. Add chicken and cook until browned.
4. Add onions and garlic. Cook until onions have softened.
5. Stir in tomatoes and beans along with bay leaves.
6. Stir well to coat and add rice and chicken broth to the pot.
7. Cover with a tight-fitting lid and bring to a simmer. Cook for 20–25 minutes or until rice is tender.



CHEF'S TIPS

- This is a great recipe to clean out the fridge. Add any leftover veggies, meat or beans to the pot.
- Great filling for homemade burritos!

Beef and Bean Crunchy Wrap



SERVINGS



PREP TIME



COOK TIME

Ingredients

Meat

1 lb	(454 g)	Ground beef, lean
3 tbsp	(45 mL)	Garlic, minced
2 tbsp	(30 mL)	Onion powder
½ tbsp	(7 mL)	Paprika
1 tbsp	(15 mL)	Cumin, ground
½ tbsp	(7 mL)	Salt
2 cup	(500 mL)	Kidney beans, rinsed and drained
3 tbsp	(45 mL)	Lemon juice

Salsa

¾ cup	(180 mL)	Avocado, mashed
¼ cup	(60 mL)	Onion, finely chopped
¼ cup	(60 mL)	Tomato, finely chopped
¼ tsp	(1 mL)	Salt
1 tbsp	(15 mL)	Lemon juice

Assembly

¼ cup	(60 mL)	Sour cream
2 cups	(500 mL)	Lettuce, shredded
1 ½ cup	(375 mL)	Mozzarella cheese, shredded
24 each		Whole wheat tortilla, 6 inch

Instructions

1. In a frying pan, over medium heat, add ground beef and cook while stirring until browned.
2. Add garlic, onion powder, paprika, cumin, 1 tsp (5 mL) salt, and cook until garlic is fragrant, being careful not to burn the spices.
3. Stir in kidney beans and cook just until beans are warmed through.
4. Remove from heat and stir in 3 tbsp (45 mL) lemon juice. Set aside.
5. In a medium bowl, combine avocado, onion, tomato, remaining salt, and lemon juice.
6. On a 6 inch tortilla, spread 1 tsp (5 mL) sour cream in the middle.
7. Top with 2 tbsp (30 mL) lettuce, ⅓ cup (80 mL) beef and bean mixture, 1 tbsp (15 mL) guacamole, and 2 tbsp (30 mL) mozzarella cheese.
8. Top with another tortilla and crimp edges with a fork to seal tortillas. In a pan, toast the tortillas until slightly crisp and cheese is melted.



CHEF'S TIPS

- Leftover beef and bean filling can be used for quesadillas or tacos.
- If tortillas will not seal, mix 1 tbsp (15 mL) flour with 2 tsp (10 mL) water to create a "food glue."

BEEF AND BULGUR CROQUETTES/KOFTAS



Beef and Bulgur Croquettes/Koftas



SERVINGS



PREP TIME



COOK TIME

Ingredients

1 cup	(250 mL)	Bulgur wheat, cooked according to package instructions
1 piece		Onion, grated
2 cloves		Garlic, grated
1 tbsp	(15 mL)	Tomato paste
1 each		Egg
2 tsp	(10 mL)	Salt
¼ tsp	(1 mL)	Cinnamon
1 tsp	(5 mL)	Paprika
2 tsp	(10 mL)	Cumin
2 tsp	(10 mL)	Black pepper
2 tsp	(10 mL)	Oregano, dried
2 tsp	(10 mL)	Parsley, dried
1 lb	(454 g)	Ground beef, lean
3 tbsp	(45 mL)	Flour

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (204°C) and line a baking tray with aluminium foil. Set aside.
2. In a large bowl, mix together cooked bulgur wheat, onion, garlic, tomato paste, egg, salt, cinnamon, paprika, cumin, black pepper, oregano, and parsley until smooth.
3. Add ground beef and flour. Mix well.
4. Form into 1-inch balls and place onto prepared tray.
5. Bake for 16–18 minutes, until an inserted thermometer reads 165°F (74°C).



CHEF'S TIPS

- Can't find bulgur? Cooked brown rice is a great substitute.
- Great batch-cooking recipe that freezes well. To reheat, simply place frozen koftas in baking tray and cover with foil. Bake for 20 minutes or until warmed all the way through.



SERVING SUGGESTION

Serve with pita wedges and your favourite sauce like hummus or tzatziki .

CHEESY MUSHROOM TARTLETS



Cheesy Mushroom Tartlets



SERVINGS



PREP TIME



COOK TIME

Ingredients

12 each	Tart shells
2 tbsp (30 mL)	Olive oil
1 each	Onion, finely chopped
½ cup (80 mL)	Red pepper, finely chopped
250 g	Mushrooms, finely chopped
¾ tsp (4 mL)	Salt
1 clove	Garlic, minced
1 ¼ tsp (6 mL)	Dried thyme
2 tbsp (30 mL)	Flour
1 cup (250 mL)	Milk
¾ cup (180 mL)	Mozzarella cheese, shredded

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Bake tart shells for 10 minutes. Set aside and allow to cool.
2. In a large pan, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add the onions and cook until softened.
3. Add red peppers, mushrooms, and salt. Cook until mushrooms have released its moisture and begins to brown.
4. Stir in the garlic and thyme and cook together until fragrant. Add flour and continue to stir while flour toasts.
5. Add milk and stir well. Simmer for 2 minutes and add cheese. Remove from heat.
6. Divide filling amongst the tart shells and return to oven for 5–7 minutes to melt cheese.



CHEF'S TIPS

- Not a fan of mushrooms? Substitute with peppers and onions.
- This is a great recipe to use up little bits of leftover proteins. Simply add to the pan before adding the flour to warm through.

CHICKPEA AND TOFU SPREAD



Chickpea and Tofu Spread



SERVINGS



PREP TIME

Ingredients

½ lb	(227 g)	Medium tofu, drained
1 can		Chickpeas, drained and rinsed
2 tsp	(10 mL)	Salt
¼ tsp	(1 mL)	Cayenne (optional)
¼ cup	(60 mL)	Mayonnaise
1 ½ tbsp	(22 mL)	Dill, chopped
2 tbsp	(30 mL)	Dill pickles, chopped

Instructions

1. Place tofu, chickpeas, salt, cayenne, and mayonnaise in blender. Pulse until spread gets to your desired consistency.
2. Remove from blender and stir in chopped dill and pickles.



CHEF'S TIPS

- To turn this spread into a veggie dip, use a softer tofu. Serve with carrots, peppers or cucumbers.
- For a spicier dip, use pickled jalapeno instead of dill pickles.
- Get creative! If you like Indian flavours, try curry powder. For a Mexican dip, try pickled jalapenos and smokey chipotle powder.

GREEK CHICKPEA AND ORZO SALAD



Greek Chickpea and Orzo Salad



SERVINGS



PREP TIME



COOK TIME

Ingredients

½ cup	(80 mL)	Orzo pasta, cooked according to package instructions
¼ piece		English cucumber, diced
¼ cup	(60 mL)	Tomatoes, diced
2 cup	(500 mL)	Chickpeas, drained and rinsed
⅓ cup	(80 mL)	Feta cheese, crumbled
¼ cup	(60 mL)	Red onion, diced
¼ cup	(60 mL)	Kalamata olives, chopped

Red Wine Vinaigrette

1 tbsp	(15 mL)	Red wine vinegar
2 tsp	(10 mL)	Lemon juice
1 clove		Garlic, minced
¼ tsp	(1 mL)	Mustard
¼ tsp	(1 mL)	Salt
¼ tsp	(1 mL)	Black pepper
½ tsp	(2 mL)	Oregano
3 tbsp	(45 mL)	Olive oil

Instructions

1. Place cooked orzo in large bowl and toss with 1 tsp (5 mL) olive oil to avoid clumping. Set aside to cool.
2. To the same bowl, add cucumbers, tomatoes, chickpeas, feta cheese, red onion, and olives.
3. In a small bowl, whisk together vinegar, lemon juice, garlic, mustard, salt, pepper, oregano, and oil.
4. Add vinaigrette to bowl with pasta and gently toss to dress salad.



CHEF'S TIPS

- For an Indian-inspired pasta salad, substitute paneer for feta, raisins for kalamata, and add some curry powder to the dressing.
- For an Italian-inspired pasta salad, substitute bocconcini for feta, zucchini for cucumbers, and add some fresh basil.

MEXICAN CHICKEN BOWL



Mexican Chicken Bowl



SERVINGS



PREP TIME



COOK TIME

Ingredients

1 lb	(454 g)	Chicken thighs, boneless and skinless, diced
1 tsp	(5 mL)	Paprika
½ tsp	(2 mL)	Salt
2 cloves		Garlic, chopped
1 tbsp	(15 mL)	Lime juice
2 tbsp	(30 mL)	Olive oil

Salsa

½ cup	(125 mL)	Black beans, drained and rinsed
½ cup	(125 mL)	Corn
½ cup	(125 mL)	Tomatoes, diced
½ cup	(125 mL)	Avocado, diced
1 tbsp	(15 mL)	Lime juice
1 tbsp	(15 mL)	Olive oil
2 sprigs		Cilantro, chopped (optional)
Pinches		Salt and black pepper

Instructions

1. In a medium sized bowl, toss together chicken thighs, paprika, salt, garlic, and 1 tbsp (15 mL) lime juice.
2. In frying pan, heat 2 tbsp (30 mL) olive oil over medium-high heat. Add seasoned chicken and sauté until chicken is cooked and internal temperature reaches 165 °F (74 °C).
3. In separate bowl, mix together black beans, corn, tomatoes, and avocado.
4. Add remaining lime juice, remaining olive oil, cilantro (if using), salt, and pepper. Toss well to coat.
5. Serve chicken and salsa with cooked brown rice.



CHEF'S TIPS

- When not in season, use frozen or canned corn.
- Coat avocado well with salsa dressing to keep the vibrant green colour.
- For older kids, try adding cumin and pickled jalapenos.



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MINI TOFU IN A BLANKET



Mini Tofu in a Blanket



SERVINGS



PREP TIME



COOK TIME

Ingredients

350 gs		Extra firm tofu
2 tbsp	(30 mL)	Olive oil
3 tbsp	(45 mL)	Apple cider vinegar
¾ tsp	(4 mL)	Paprika
¾ tsp	(4 mL)	Onion powder
¾ tsp	(4 mL)	Garlic powder
1 ½ tbsp	(22 mL)	Tomato paste
½ tsp	(2 mL)	Black pepper
½ tsp	(2 mL)	Thyme
1 tsp	(5 mL)	Salt
1 tube		Crescent rolls
¾ cup	(160 mL)	Mozzarella cheese, grated
½ tbsp	(7 mL)	Sesame seeds (optional)

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C) and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. For marinade, mix together olive oil, vinegar, paprika, onion powder, garlic powder, tomato paste, pepper, thyme, and salt in a medium bowl. Set aside.
3. Drain and pat dry tofu. Cut into 16 “mini sausages.” Add to bowl with marinade and toss to coat.
4. Place marinated tofu onto prepared tray and bake for 15 minutes, turning once.
5. On a flour dusted counter, gently unroll crescent dough and separate into 8 triangles. Top each triangle with 1 tbsp cheese and 2 pieces of baked tofu. Roll like a croissant and place onto the parchment lined trap.
6. If using sesame seeds, brush crescents with a little water and sprinkle with sesame seeds.
7. Bake for 15–17 minutes, or until the pastry is golden brown.

RESHMI KABAB WITH MINT CHUTNEY



Reshmi Kabab with Mint Chutney



SERVINGS



PREP TIME



COOK TIME

Ingredients

Mint Chutney

1 ½ cup	(375 mL)	Cilantro
1 cup	(250 mL)	Mint, lightly packed
¼ cup	(60 mL)	Lemon juice
2 tsp	(10 mL)	Garlic
½ tsp	(2 mL)	Salt

Kabab

1 lb	(454 g)	Chicken, ground
2 tsp	(10 mL)	Garlic, minced
2 tsp	(10 mL)	Ginger, minced
1 tsp	(5 mL)	Coriander, ground
½ tsp	(2 mL)	Garam masala
1 tsp	(5 mL)	Salt
½ cup	(125 mL)	Greek yogurt
¾ cup	(180 mL)	Breadcrumbs
2 tbsp	(30 mL)	Olive oil

Instructions

1. In a blender, add cilantro, mint leaves, lemon juice, garlic, salt and blend to a smooth sauce.
2. In a medium bowl, add minced chicken, garlic, ginger, coriander, garam masala, salt, yogurt, breadcrumbs and stir until well combined.
3. Divide the mixture into 2 tbsp (30 mL) balls and roll into mini kebabs.
4. In a non stick frying pan, heat oil over medium heat.
5. Place kababs in pan and cook until nicely browned and internal temperature reaches 165°F (74°C).



CHEF'S TIPS

- Leftover chutney is great as a spread in sandwiches or store in the freezer.
- For a change, substitute chicken for ground turkey or ground beef.



SERVING SUGGESTION

Serve kabab and chutney in a mini naan or pita.



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SPINACH EGG BITES



Spinach Egg Bites



SERVINGS



PREP TIME



COOK TIME

Ingredients

4 each		Eggs
½ cup	(125 mL)	Milk
2 tbsp	(30 mL)	Parmesan cheese
¼ tsp	(1 mL)	Salt
½ tsp	(2 mL)	Dried basil
½ tsp	(2 mL)	Dried oregano
¼ tsp	(1 mL)	Garlic powder
¼ cup	(60 mL)	Frozen spinach, thawed and squeezed
⅔ cup	(160 mL)	Cottage cheese
¼ cup	(60 mL)	Flour
As needed		Non stick spray

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C) and spray silicone cups with non stick spray. Place cups in large, deep, oven-safe dish.
2. In a blender, add eggs, milk, parmesan cheese, salt, basil, oregano and garlic powder, spinach, cottage cheese, and flour.
3. Blend until smooth and divide the batter amongst the silicone cups.
4. To create a bain marie, pour boiling water into baking pan.
5. Carefully cover with aluminum foil and place into oven.
6. Bake covered for 25 minutes. Remove aluminum foil and bake for another 5 minutes.
7. Remove from oven and set sit for 5 minutes before removing from silicone.



CHEF'S TIPS

- If you don't have silicone cups, use muffin tins! Just be sure to spray them with nonstick spray.
- Try adding your family's favourite veggies like red peppers or broccoli.

SPINACH PESTO CHICKEN PUFFS



Spinach Pesto Chicken Puffs



SERVINGS



PREP TIME



COOK TIME

Ingredients

Spinach Pesto

1 cup	(250 mL)	Spinach, frozen, drained
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⅓ cup	(80 mL)	Basil
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½ cup	(125 mL)	Olive oil
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1 clove		Garlic, minced
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2 tbsp	(30 mL)	Lemon juice
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2 tbsp	(30 mL)	Parmesan cheese, grated.
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½ tsp	(2 mL)	Salt
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Assembly

1 tbsp	(15 mL)	Vegetable oil
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½ lb	(227 g)	Ground chicken
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½ tsp	(2 mL)	Salt
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½ tsp	(2 mL)	Black pepper
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1 sheet	(200 g)	Puff pastry
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2 tbsp	(30 mL)	Cream cheese, softened.
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Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (204°C). Line a tray with parchment paper and set aside.
2. In a blender, combine spinach, basil, olive oil, garlic, lemon juice, parmesan cheese, salt, and blend until smooth.
3. In a pan, heat vegetable oil and add chicken. Season with salt, black pepper and cook until nicely browned while breaking into small crumbles.
4. Remove from heat and stir in 3 tbsp (45 mL) of the prepared pesto.
5. On prepared tray, unfold puff pastry and divide into two.
6. On half of each puff pastry, spread 1 tbsp (15 mL) cream cheese and ½ cup (125 mL) cooked chicken.
7. Fold the uncovered half over the chicken and seal edges.
8. Bake for 25–30 minutes or until light golden.



CHEF'S TIP

- Use leftover pesto with your favourite pasta for a quick dinner.

A close-up photograph of a black plate containing a meal. The base is a mound of white, fluffy rice. On top of the rice are three round meatballs coated in a thick, glossy, reddish-brown sauce. Interspersed with the meatballs are several chunks of bright orange pineapple, also coated in the same sauce. To the left of the meatballs is a portion of vibrant green broccoli florets. The entire dish is garnished with several thin, green rings of scallions. The plate is set on a white marble surface, and a silver fork is visible in the background, resting on a light green napkin.

Sweet and Sour Turkey Meatballs



SERVINGS



PREP TIME



COOK TIME

Ingredients

Meatballs

1 lb	(454 g)	Ground turkey
1 tbsp	(15 mL)	Ginger, minced
2 tbsp	(30 mL)	Garlic, minced
2 tbsp	(30 mL)	Soy sauce
1 tbsp	(15 mL)	Sesame oil
1 cup	(250 mL)	Breadcrumbs
2 sprigs		Green onion, thinly sliced

Sauce

2 tbsp	(30 mL)	Honey
2 tbsp	(30 mL)	Ketchup
¼ cup	(60 mL)	Pineapple juice (reserved from canned pineapple)
3 tbsp	(45 mL)	Soy sauce
1 cup	(250 mL)	Water
1 ½ tbsp	(22 mL)	Cornstarch

Assembly

1 tbsp	(15 mL)	Vegetable oil
1 each		Onion, chopped
2 cloves		Garlic, minced
1 cup	(250 mL)	Canned pineapple, chopped

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Line a baking tray with aluminium foil and set aside.
2. In a large bowl, mix turkey, ginger, garlic, soy sauce, sesame oil, breadcrumbs and green onions together. Form into 1 inch meatballs and place onto prepared tray.
3. Bake in heated oven for 15- 20 minutes or until inserted thermometer reaches 165°F (74°C). Cover with aluminum foil to keep warm and set aside.
4. In a small bowl, whisk together honey, ketchup, pineapple, soy sauce, water and cornstarch. Set aside.
5. In a large frying pan, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onions and garlic and sauté until garlic is fragrant. Add sauce and cook for until sauce begins to thicken.
6. Stir in meatballs and pineapple pieces. Cook just until warmed through.



CHEF'S TIP

- If using fresh pineapple, you can use orange juice in the sauce.



SERVING SUGGESTION

Serve with jasmine rice and broccoli.

TERIYAKI CHICKEN



Teriyaki Chicken



SERVINGS



PREP TIME



COOK TIME

Ingredients

2 tbsp	(30 mL)	Soy sauce
3 tbsp	(45 mL)	Rice vinegar
1 ½ tbsp	(22 mL)	Sesame oil
1 ½ tbsp	(22 mL)	Honey
3 tbsp	(45 mL)	Water
1 tbsp	(15 mL)	Garlic, minced
½ tbsp	(7 mL)	Cornstarch
½ tsp	(2 mL)	Black pepper
1 ½ tbsp	(22 mL)	Vegetable oil
¼ cup	(60 mL)	Green onion, sliced and divided
1 lb	(454 g)	Chicken thighs, diced
1 tsp	(5 mL)	Sesame seeds, optional

Instructions

1. In a bowl whisk together soy sauce, rice vinegar, sesame oil, honey, water, garlic, cornstarch, and black pepper. Set aside.
2. In a large frying pan, heat oil over medium heat. Add the white ends of the green onion and sauté until fragrant being careful not to burn.
3. Add chicken thighs and continue cooking until nicely browned and cook through.
4. Pour in the prepared sauce and bring to a simmer.
5. Cook until sauce has thickened. Stir in remaining green onions and sesame seeds.



CHEF'S TIP

- For a vegetarian option, substitute chicken with firm tofu.



SERVING SUGGESTION

Serve with brown rice and steamed broccoli.



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TUNA SPREAD



Tuna Spread



SERVINGS



PREP TIME

Ingredients

1 can	(120 g)	Tuna, drained
¼ cup	(60 mL)	Celery, finely diced
¼ cup	(60 mL)	Dried cranberries (optional)
¼ each		Apple, finely diced
¼ tsp	(1 mL)	Salt
½ tsp	(2 mL)	Garlic powder
1 tbsp	(15 mL)	Lemon juice
2 tbsp	(30 mL)	Mayonnaise

Instructions

1. In a medium sized bowl, flake tuna with a fork.
2. Add celery, cranberries, apples, salt, garlic powder, lemon juice, and mayonnaise.
3. Gently mix together.



CHEF'S TIPS

- This recipe is so quick to prepare that you can make smaller amounts more often.
- Customize with your favourite additions like diced pears and walnuts.



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