



# DINNER RECIPES

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## SUPER-QUICK CHICKEN AND VEGETABLE STIR-FRY

Stir-fries were one of the first dishes I cooked when I became conscious of eating more healthily. My cooking skills were fairly basic – to say the least! – but I could still rustle up a tasty dinner. Stir-fries are quick and simple to prepare and super-healthy. What's not to love?

**PREP TIME** 10 minutes

**COOKING TIME** 10 to 15 minutes

**SERVES** 2

2 tsp rapeseed oil  
2 chicken fillets (125g each), sliced crossways into 1cm-thick strips  
1 medium red onion, peeled and thinly sliced  
1 medium red pepper, thinly sliced  
200g mushrooms, thinly sliced  
2 large handfuls of baby spinach (approx. 50g)  
3 spring onions, sliced into 1cm pieces  
1 clove of garlic, peeled and crushed  
1 tbsp soy sauce  
½ tsp sesame oil  
1 tsp chopped coriander

- 1 Put the oil in a non-stick wok or large non-stick frying pan and heat on high until the oil is hot.
- 2 Add the chicken and cook on a high heat for 2 minutes, stirring continuously with a wooden or silicone spoon or spatula.
- 3 Reduce the heat to medium and add the sliced onion, pepper and mushrooms and cook for 3 minutes, stirring continuously, until the onion and pepper have lost their crispness and started to soften. Cook for a minute or two longer to soften further, adding a few drops of water if the pan is starting to dry out.
- 4 Add the spinach, spring onions and garlic, mix well and cook for a further 2 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- 5 Add the soy sauce and sesame oil and stir through.
- 6 Scatter the chopped coriander on top and you're ready to serve, either on its own or with brown rice or noodles.
- 7 One of the beauties of stir-fries is that you can add absolutely anything! This recipe will work just as well with thinly sliced beef, prawns or even tofu, and is just as quick to cook!





## SUPERFOOD SALAD

This salad is especially handy if you get home late at night and don't want to eat a heavy meal. This happens to me all the time. On days when I know it's going to happen I will have my main meal at lunchtime and then opt for soup or this salad in the evening.

- 1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas mark 4. Put the butternut squash into a bowl and add in the oil and the ground cumin. Mix everything together with your hands to ensure the squash pieces are evenly coated.
- 2** Place the squash on a baking tray and put into the preheated oven for 10 minutes.
- 3** In the meantime, toss the red onion and pepper in the bowl with a drizzle more of oil. Add these to the baking tray with the butternut squash and return to the oven for a further 15 minutes.
- 4** Prepare the remaining ingredients and place in a large bowl. Remove the roasted squash and vegetables from the oven and add them to the bowl. Toss everything together and serve.
- 5** This salad will not need a dressing as the mandarin will keep it juicy, as will the butternut squash.

**PREP TIME** 10 minutes  
**COOKING TIME** 25 minutes  
**SERVES** 2

- ½ butternut squash, peeled and cut into chunks
- 1 tbsp rapeseed oil
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- 1 red onion, peeled and cut into chunks
- 1 red pepper, cut into chunks
- 2 large handfuls of baby spinach or rocket
- 1 baby avocado, peeled, halved, stoned and chopped into chunks
- 1 tbsp sunflower seeds, toasted
- 1 mandarin orange, cut into segments

# KARL'S CREAMY CHICKEN AND SWEET POTATO TREAT

This is one of those recipes that tastes like it shouldn't be good for you but actually it is. I have clients who absolutely swear by it for their dinner, and it's surprisingly easy to make. To be honest, it's not glamorous, so don't be surprised if it looks a bit homely – but the taste is knockout!

**PREP TIME** 5 minutes

**COOKING TIME** 40 minutes

**SERVES** 2

2 large sweet potatoes,  
scrubbed  
2 boneless chicken  
breasts  
1 tsp rapeseed oil  
1 large onion, peeled and  
thinly sliced  
3 medium leeks, sliced  
2 cloves of garlic, peeled  
and crushed  
6 medium mushrooms,  
sliced  
50ml single cream  
1 tsp dried oregano  
2 handfuls of baby  
spinach leaves  
sea salt and freshly  
ground black pepper

**1** Preheat the oven to 200°C/400°F/gas mark 6.

**2** Put the sweet potatoes on a baking tray, pierce the skin with a fork and bake in the oven for 30 minutes. While the potatoes are baking, dice the chicken breasts into roughly 1cm cubes.

**3** Heat the rapeseed oil in a large non-stick frying pan and cook the chicken pieces on a high heat until golden brown. When cooked, set aside on a plate on a piece of kitchen paper (the kitchen paper will soak up any oil).

**4** Put the pan back on a high heat (no need to wash the pan) and add the sliced onion (there should be enough oil left to cook it).

**5** When the onion has softened (about 3 minutes) add the sliced leeks, garlic and mushrooms and cook for a further 3 to 5 minutes on a medium heat until everything is soft.

**6** Add the cream and oregano. Season to taste and cook for a further 2 minutes on a low heat, stirring gently.

**7** Add the cooked chicken and the baby spinach to the mix, cover and bring to a simmer for 2 minutes .

**8** Remove the sweet potatoes from the oven after 30 minutes (you can stick a skewer into the middle to test that they're soft right the way through; leave in the oven for a few more minutes if you need to). Dice into 2cm cubes and add to the chicken mix in the pan. Mix through gently and then serve in a deep bowl.

## CHILLI CHICKEN PASTA

I love pasta. I love chicken. I love fiery food. This is a combination of all of those loves. It's great for the night before a long run, and when I was doing Ironman Triathlons in my twenties I ate a LOT of this dish! However, it's also a very tasty and practical dish for a family dinner.

**PREP TIME** 5 minutes

**COOKING TIME** 15 minutes

**SERVES** 2

300g dry brown pasta  
(penne and fusilli are good shapes for this dish, but you can use whatever you have to hand)

1 tsp rapeseed oil

1 large chicken breast  
(125 to 150g), cut into 1cm cubes

1 clove of garlic, peeled and crushed

1 medium red pepper, roughly chopped

1 small chilli, deseeded (if you prefer less heat) and finely diced

2 medium tomatoes, roughly chopped

chilli flakes (optional)

sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

**1** Cook the pasta according to the packet instructions.

**2** While the pasta is cooking, heat the oil in a pan over a high heat. Add the chicken, garlic and red pepper and cook for 1 minute.

**3** Reduce the heat to medium and add the chilli to taste (don't add all the chilli if you're nervous about the heat). Season to taste and cook for 6 to 8 minutes until everything has softened down.

**4** Add the chopped tomatoes and cook for a further 1 to 2 minutes.

**5** By now the pasta will be cooked or nearly cooked. Check a piece and if it is a little too hard, leave it for another minute or two. (You want it to have a bit of bite left to it – it shouldn't be totally soft, but it shouldn't be chewy either!)

**6** Before you drain the pasta, take out a tablespoon of the pasta water and put it to one side. Drain the pasta.

**7** Toss together the chicken and veg mix and the pasta and then serve. (Add the reserved pasta water if the chicken and veg mix isn't particularly wet. It will help everything to mix nicely.)

**8** Sprinkle a few chilli flakes on top to garnish if you like – you can add as much as you can handle!





## CHICKEN AND RED LENTIL CURRY

Lentils are a fantastic ingredient, yet I used to fear them, as I wasn't sure how to cook them. However, they are an extremely cheap and easy-to-cook ingredient and full of nutrition. So if you've never cooked with lentils before, give this recipe a go and you will see what you have been missing!

- 1** Put the oil in a large non-stick frying pan or saucepan and heat on high until the oil is hot.
- 2** Add the onion, garlic and ginger, then reduce the heat to medium and fry until softened. Stir from time to time.
- 3** Add the chicken and the spices and cook for 5 minutes on a medium heat. Stir occasionally.
- 4** Add the tomatoes, stock, lentils and coconut milk. Season to taste, stir and then bring to the boil.
- 5** Reduce the heat to a light simmer and cook for 20 minutes or until the chicken is fully cooked.
- 6** Lentils really soak up liquid so add a little more water or chicken stock if the sauce is thickening too much and the mix is starting to look heavy or dry.
- 7** Finally, stir in the spinach, which will wilt down quickly with the heat.
- 8** Garnish with a few fresh coriander leaves if you like and serve with basmati or brown rice.

**PREP TIME** 5 minutes

**COOKING TIME** 30 minutes

**SERVES** 4

- 1 tsp rapeseed oil
- 1 small onion, peeled and finely diced
- 1 clove of garlic, peeled and crushed
- 1 knuckle-sized piece of fresh ginger, peeled and finely chopped
- 4 chicken breasts (125g each), cut into 2cm pieces
- 1 tsp chopped coriander, plus extra leaves to garnish (optional)
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp ground turmeric
- ½ tsp chilli powder
- 1 x 400g tin chopped tomatoes
- 300ml chicken stock
- 100g red lentils
- 200ml low-fat coconut milk
- 100g baby spinach leaves
- sea salt and freshly ground black pepper



## CRISPY CHICKEN GOUJONS

A healthy take on the pub grub classic. I love the goujons from An Súgán in Clonakilty in West Cork, so I thought I'd try to make my own version – perfect for a TV dinner! These are very moreish so are perfect for parties – adults' or children's.

- 1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas mark 4.
- 2** Cut the chicken breasts lengthways into thin strips.
- 3** In a shallow dish lightly beat the egg, honey and mustard together.
- 4** Crush the cornflakes in another dish and add a generous grinding of black pepper. Stir the pepper through the cornflake mix.
- 5** Dip the chicken strips into the egg mixture and then roll in the cornflake mixture to coat.
- 6** Arrange the chicken strips on a baking tray lined with baking parchment.
- 7** Put into the preheated oven and bake for 12 minutes. Check one of the goujons. If the chicken is still showing some pink flesh, continue to cook for another few minutes. The chicken flesh should all be white.
- 8** Mix together all the dip ingredients in a bowl with a fork.
- 9** Serve with goujons with the lemon and chive dip. You could add a side salad if you're having these as a lunch or light dinner.

**PREP TIME** 5 minutes  
**COOKING TIME** 15 minutes  
**SERVES** 4

3 large chicken breasts  
(150g each )  
1 large egg  
1 tbsp honey  
1 tsp Dijon or other mild  
mustard  
2 to 3 small mugs of  
crushed cornflakes  
freshly ground black  
pepper

**FOR THE DIP**  
4 tbsp Greek yoghurt  
2 tsp mayonnaise  
2 tbsp dried or fresh  
chives  
juice of 1 lemon

## TURKEY BURGERS

Who doesn't love a good burger? This is my take on the turkey burger craze. They are so flexible that you can make them with anything that's in your fridge.

**PREP TIME** 5 minutes

**COOKING TIME** 25 minutes

**SERVES** 3 to 4

300g lean turkey mince  
1 onion, peeled and finely chopped  
6 medium mushrooms, finely diced  
a few fresh basil leaves, finely chopped  
a few fresh coriander leaves, finely chopped  
1 tsp Tabasco  
1 large egg  
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

**1** Put all the ingredients (except the oil) into a large bowl and mix together thoroughly using your hands (washed first, of course!).

**2** Shape the mix into burgers – you'll make 3 to 4 good-sized burgers from this mix. (If you want to make mini-burgers for children, just make them half the size.)

**3** Fry the burgers in a non-stick pan with a little rapeseed oil on a medium heat, or put them under the grill under a medium heat. Cook for 10 to 15 minutes, turning halfway, until cooked through.

**4** Serve with a nice mixed salad or even a burger bun with the usual trimmings!

**5** These are perfect to freeze, so you could double or triple this recipe and freeze a big batch of uncooked burgers to have your own handy supply of healthy fast food.





# BAKED HAKE WITH SWEET POTATO

I know – cooking fish scares you! It used to scare me too. In reality, it isn't scary at all. Once you get your confidence up, you will be cooking fish at least once a week. Try this recipe to get you going.

**PREP TIME** 5 minutes

**COOKING TIME** 45 minutes

**SERVES** 2

1 medium sweet potato, peeled and cut into chunks  
2 x 200g hake fillets, skinless  
juice of ½ lemon  
1 tsp rapeseed oil  
200g fresh or frozen green beans  
200g fresh or frozen peas  
lemon slice and chopped parsley to garnish (optional)  
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas mark 4.
- 2 Put the sweet potato chunks into boiling water, reduce the heat and leave on a strong simmer for about 20 minutes.
- 3 Line a baking tray with greaseproof paper. Place the hake fillets on the greaseproof paper and season with a little salt and pepper and a squeeze of lemon juice (there's no need to squeeze the lemon in advance, just hold your half lemon in your hand and squeeze the juice out, catching any pips in your other hand; unless your lemon is very small and dry, you can leave a little juice behind to season your final dish).
- 4 Put the hake onto the middle shelf of the preheated oven and cook for 8 to 10 minutes.
- 5 While the fish is cooking, heat the rapeseed oil in a wok or ordinary non-stick frying pan on a high heat. When the oil is hot, add the green beans and cook for about 5 minutes so that they're cooked but not soggy. Add the frozen peas for a final 2 minutes' cooking. Season lightly with salt and pepper.
- 6 Check that the sweet potato is cooked through, then drain it, season to taste and mash it with a fork.
- 7 Now check your fish. Thicker pieces will take longer to cook, so take the hake out of the oven to check it after 8 minutes (shutting the oven door to retain the heat). If the fish is gently falling apart at the thickest point, it's ready and you can turn off your

oven. If not, put it back into the oven for another minute or two.

- 8 Divide the mash between two plates. Place the hake fillets partly resting on the mash and serve your green veg alongside (you can be fancier if serving friends by putting the mash in the centre with the fish on top and scattering the green veg all around). Add a final light squeeze of lemon juice over everything. Garnish the fish with a half slice of lemon and a sprinkling of parsley leaves. Pretty as a picture and super-healthy!





## BAKED SALMON WITH MEDITERRANEAN VEGETABLES

Salmon is a great source of protein and healthy fats and is great for your body – but I have to admit that I don't eat it! This is a recipe that my wife makes and it always smells delicious. With so many people eating salmon, I wanted to share it in the book.

- 1** Preheat the oven to 200°C/400°F/gas mark 6.
- 2** Place the chopped aubergine, courgette, red pepper and red onion in a bowl, then add the rosemary and olive oil, season and mix it all together with your hands.
- 3** Spread out the coated vegetables on a baking tray lined with baking parchment and put into the preheated oven for about 8 minutes.
- 4** Now push the vegetables to one side and put the salmon fillets in the middle of the baking tray, season with pepper and return to the oven for a further 10 minutes.
- 5** Check that the salmon fillets are cooked through – the colour will be pale pink all over and if you poke them with a knife the flesh will be coming apart slightly – and then remove from the oven. Mix the spinach through the cooked veg – the leaves will wilt down in the heat – and serve.

**6** This is a simple lunch or after-work dinner that takes very little time and is really satisfying and packed full of nutrition. I only wish I could get on board with salmon so I could eat it myself!

**PREP TIME** 10 minutes  
**COOKING TIME** 20 minutes  
**SERVES** 2

½ aubergine, chopped into 2cm chunks  
1 small courgette, chopped into 2cm chunks  
1 red pepper, chopped into 2cm chunks  
1 red onion, peeled and chopped into 2cm chunks  
1 tsp dried rosemary  
1 tbsp olive oil  
2 salmon fillets (approx 150g each)  
2 handfuls of baby spinach leaves  
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

## HEALTHY ROAST VEGETABLE LASAGNE

Whenever we have a group of friends coming over, the large dish comes out and I am into lasagne mode – healthy, hearty and full of goodness!

**PREPTIME** 10 minutes

**COOKING TIME** 1 hour

**SERVES** 4

1 medium red pepper,  
roughly chopped  
1 medium yellow pepper,  
roughly chopped  
1 medium green pepper,  
roughly chopped  
1 medium carrot,  
unpeeled but washed,  
chopped into 2cm  
chunks  
1 medium courgette,  
chopped into 2cm  
chunks  
1 pack of mushrooms,  
roughly sliced  
2 tbsp rapeseed oil  
1 x 200g pack of cherry  
tomatoes, halved  
300ml passata  
1 x 50g pack baby leaf  
washed spinach  
300ml Greek yoghurt  
250g ricotta cheese  
freshly grated nutmeg  
(optional)  
1 x 500g pack wholegrain  
lasagne sheets

- 1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas mark 4.
- 2** Line a large roasting tray with baking parchment and put in the chopped peppers, carrot, courgette and mushrooms (it doesn't matter how big or small the vegetables are chopped as long as they are all about the same size so they roast evenly).
- 3** Drizzle the oil over the vegetables and stir so they are all evenly coated. Spread out the veg into an even layer and put the roasting tray into the preheated oven for about 20 minutes until the veg are roasted (you can check after 15 to make sure they're not drying out).
- 4** Drain off any excess liquid that might have come from the mushrooms cooking down and then add the halved cherry tomatoes for the final 5 minutes of cooking time.
- 5** Once you remove the roasted veg from the oven, pour the passata over them, scatter the spinach leaves on top, season lightly and stir. (Leave the oven on while you do this, as you'll be using it again shortly.)
- 6** Mix the yoghurt and ricotta together in a small bowl and season with a little salt, pepper and the nutmeg, if using. (Just add a little nutmeg at first to see if it's to your taste – about half a teaspoon. You can always add more next time you cook the recipe until you find the right amount for you!)



### TOPPING

50g extra-mature Cheddar or Parmesan, finely grated  
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

**7** To assemble, spread even layers of each of the elements in a lasagne dish in this order:

yoghurt/ricotta; lasagne sheets; roasted veg; yoghurt/ricotta; lasagne sheets; roasted veg; yoghurt/ricotta; lasagne sheets

**8** Finally, top with the finely grated Cheddar or Parmesan.

**9** Pop in the oven for 40 to 45 minutes until the lasagne sheets are cooked and the sauces are bubbling.

**10** Serve with a nice simple salad to really ramp up your intake of healthy veg. Whoever said lasagne was stodgy?



## LEAN AND JUICY MINCE

This simple yet healthy mince dish is a great way to get some lean protein into your day. It works really well when added to pasta or as a potato or sweet potato topping!

**1** Put the oil in a large non-stick frying pan and heat on high until the oil is hot.

**2** Add the onion, carrots and red pepper, reduce the heat to medium and cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.

**3** Add the garlic and cook for another 5 minutes or so – still stirring from time to time – until the vegetables are soft.

**4** Turn the heat back to high, add the mince and cook for 2 minutes, stirring constantly, until the meat is browned.

**5** Add the oregano, spices, passata and Tabasco. Season to taste. Bring the mix to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer gently for 15 minutes.

**6** Serve your mince with pasta, rice or a baked potato (regular or sweet) for a delicious, filling, healthy dinner!

**PREP TIME** 5 minutes

**COOKING TIME** 30 minutes

**SERVES** 4

1 tsp rapeseed oil  
1 large onion, peeled and finely chopped  
2 carrots, peeled and finely chopped  
1 red pepper, finely chopped  
2 cloves of garlic, peeled and crushed  
300g lean mince, either beef or turkey  
1 tsp dried oregano  
1 tsp grated nutmeg  
1 tsp ground cinnamon  
1 tsp chilli flakes  
300ml passata  
a dash of Tabasco – or more if you like it spicy!  
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

# A HEARTY HOTPOT

I can't really call this one a fast food, but it's so delicious and so healthy that I couldn't leave it out! It's a great take on a classic beef and red wine stew. I make a large pot of it, divide it into portions and then freeze them. If you follow my example, you'll always have this stew when you feel the need for something comforting!

**PREP TIME** 15 minutes

**COOKING TIME** 2 hours

**SERVES** 8

2 tbsp rapeseed oil

1 large onion, peeled and roughly chopped

3 cloves of garlic, peeled and finely chopped

300g mushrooms, roughly chopped

1.5kg round steak, chopped into 2cm cubes

250ml red wine

250ml chicken stock

2 tbsp red wine vinegar

4 large sweet potatoes, peeled and chopped into 2cm chunks

sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

**1** Preheat the oven to 160°C/325°F/gas mark 3.

**2** Heat the oil over a medium heat in a large ovenproof casserole pot or saucepan.

**3** Add the onions and cook gently until soft, generally 8 to 10 minutes. Now add the garlic and mushrooms and cook for another minute or so.

**4** Add the steak and brown it completely – this should take about 2 minutes – before adding the wine, chicken stock and wine vinegar and seasoning to taste.

**5** Stir, then increase the heat and bring the mixture to the boil.

**6** Remove from the heat, cover the pot or saucepan with a lid and put into the centre of the oven.

**7** After 1 hour put the sweet potatoes in a pot of boiling water. Cook on a medium heat, at a simmer, until they are tender – about 15 to 20 minutes. When cooked, remove from the heat, drain, add a little salt and pepper to taste and mash with a fork or potato masher.

**8** After 90 minutes of cooking remove the casserole dish from the oven. Increase the oven temperature to 200°C/400°F/gas mark 6.

**9** Uncover the dish. (Remember, everything will be very hot so be careful to use good oven gloves and

take care to avoid the hot steam when removing the lid.) Spoon the sweet potato mash over the stew in a thick layer and press the surface with a fork to make ridges on the top.

**10** Place the casserole dish back in the oven for 20 minutes, until the mash is crisp and beginning to brown. Serve on its own or with a fresh, healthy salad on the side.





## BEEF AND GUINNESS STEW

Again, not a quick one, but it's an absolute classic. What's great about it is that it's very quick to throw together and it tastes like you've been slaving over it for hours, so it's perfect if you have guests! It's another one that freezes very well.

- 1** Preheat the oven to 160°C/325°F/gas mark 3.
- 2** Heat the oil over a medium heat in a large ovenproof casserole pot or saucepan.
- 3** Add the chopped onion and cook gently until soft, generally 8 to 10 minutes. Now add the garlic, carrots, celery and mushrooms and cook for another minute or so.
- 4** Add the steak and brown it completely – it should take about 2 minutes – before adding the Guinness, tomatoes and chicken stock and seasoning to taste.
- 5** Stir, then increase the heat and bring the mixture to the boil.
- 6** Remove from the heat, cover the pot or saucepan with a lid and put into the centre of the oven.
- 7** Leave it for 2 hours (walk the dog... go for a run!).
- 8** When you return, you'll end up with a wonderfully rich, comforting stew.
- 9** Serve with potatoes, sweet potatoes or brown rice.

**PREP TIME** 15 minutes  
**COOKING TIME** 2 hours 20 minutes  
**SERVES** 8

2 tbsp rapeseed oil  
1 large onion, peeled and finely chopped  
3 cloves of garlic, peeled and finely chopped  
6 large carrots, peeled and finely chopped  
4 sticks of celery, finely chopped  
300g mushrooms, finely chopped  
1.5kg round steak, chopped into 2cm cubes  
250ml Guinness  
1 x 400g tin chopped tomatoes  
250ml chicken stock  
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper