



LUNCH RECIPES

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EVERYDAY VEGETABLE SOUP

Soup is one of my favourite things to make – so simple, so delicious and full of nutrients. A great filling meal, especially if you get home late at night as I often do!

PREP TIME 10 minutes

COOKING TIME 40 minutes

SERVES 4

- 1 tsp rapeseed oil
- 1 large onion, peeled and finely chopped
- 2 cloves of garlic, peeled and finely chopped
- 2 large carrots, scrubbed and thinly sliced (no need to peel)
- 2 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1 to 2cm cubes
- 1 litre vegetable stock (use 2 vegetable stock cubes)¹
- 1 red pepper, roughly sliced
- 1 yellow pepper, roughly sliced
- 1 x 400g tin white beans, drained and rinsed
- ½ tsp dried basil
- ½ tsp dried oregano
- 2 dried bay leaves
- 1 tbsp soy sauce (optional)
- ½ medium head of broccoli – florets only

1 Heat the oil in a large saucepan over a medium heat and add the onion. Fry for two minutes, then reduce the heat and allow the onion to soften, stirring occasionally. If it starts to stick, add a tablespoon of water. It will be soft and golden in about 10 minutes.

2 Add the chopped garlic, carrots and sweet potatoes and the stock. Increase the heat to high and bring to the boil. Once the mixture has boiled, reduce the heat to low and simmer for about 10 minutes until the carrots and sweet potatoes are slightly tender (stick a fork in a piece to test this).

3 Add all the remaining ingredients except the broccoli and continue to simmer until the vegetables are soft – about 10 to 15 minutes.

4 Add the broccoli and simmer for 5 more minutes.

5 You can use a stick blender to whizz the soup together in the pan or let it cool slightly and pour into a liquidizer.

6 Once it's cool enough to taste, check for seasoning (when it's really hot, you won't be able to taste accurately). If you use stock cubes you may not need to add salt as most stock cubes are a little salty.

7 Serve with a dollop of Greek yoghurt on top if you like.

8 Once you're happy making this soup, you can start to experiment with different combinations of veg that you like, or that are in season and cheap. You could, for instance, drop the carrot and sweet potato and add more broccoli to make that the hero of the soup. Just simmer until the broccoli is tender but still nice and green.

9 You can freeze this soup, so you may want to make more than you need and have a healthy option on standby for when you're pressed for time.

EXTRAS

a dollop of Greek yoghurt, to serve (optional)
sea salt (optional) and freshly ground black pepper

STOCK CUBES

It's best if you can use organic stock cubes, as they will have a better flavour and fewer additives. Most supermarkets have them. If not, you can get them in any health-food shop. It is very quick and easy to make your own vegetable stock too – see the recipes on [page xx](#).



THAI CHICKEN SOUP

Between the chicken, the lovely fragrant Thai flavours and the filling noodles, you're getting a lot of great nutrients here in one warming, delicious bowl that feels like a treat.

- 1** Heat the oil in a large saucepan over a medium heat. Add the spring onions, garlic and ginger and cook for about 4 minutes, stirring frequently, until softened.
- 2** Add the carrots and chilli and cook for a further 2 minutes.
- 3** Add the curry paste, stock, lemongrass and a tablespoon of fish sauce and bring the mixture to the boil. Add the red peppers and noodles, then reduce the heat and simmer for a further 2 to 3 minutes.
- 4** Add the chicken and simmer for another 2 to 3 minutes, until the noodles are fully cooked (they should still have a tiny bite to them and not be soggy) and the chicken is heated through.
- 5** Add a tablespoon of lime juice and the chopped coriander and taste. Add more lime juice (for a more fragrant flavour) and/or more fish sauce (for a deeper, saltier flavour) if you like.

PREP TIME 10 minutes
COOKING TIME 15 minutes
SERVES 2

1 tbsp rapeseed oil
1 bunch of spring onions, thinly sliced
1 large clove of garlic, peeled and finely chopped
1in piece of fresh ginger, peeled and finely chopped
2 carrots, peeled and finely chopped
1 red chilli, deseeded (if you prefer less heat) and thinly sliced
1 tbsp Thai green curry paste
650ml chicken stock
1 stick of lemongrass, crushed
1 tbsp fish sauce, plus extra to taste
1 red pepper, sliced lengthways
50g wholewheat noodles
1 cooked chicken breast, shredded or finely diced
1 tbsp lime juice, plus extra to taste
a handful of fresh coriander, chopped

CHICKEN, VEGETABLE AND NOODLE SOUP

This is one of my favourite filling soups, as it just feels so warm and nourishing – when you eat it, you'll love it!

PREP TIME 10 minutes

COOKING TIME 15 to 20 minutes

SERVES 4

1 tbsp rapeseed oil
1 red chilli, deseeded
(if you prefer less heat)
and finely chopped
2cm piece of fresh ginger,
peeled and finely
chopped
1 clove of garlic, peeled
and finely chopped
3 large chicken breasts
(400 to 450g), thinly
sliced into strips
1 large head of broccoli,
cut into small florets
125g mushrooms, thinly
sliced
1 litre vegetable stock
(use 2 vegetable stock
cubes, or use
homemade – see recipe
on [page xx](#))
200g wholewheat noodles
(4 nests)
2 tbsp soy sauce
a handful of fresh
coriander, chopped
juice of 1 lime

1 Heat the oil in a large saucepan over a medium heat. Add the chilli, ginger and garlic and cook for about a minute, stirring occasionally.

2 Add the chicken strips and fry in the saucepan over a medium heat, stirring frequently, until the chicken is cooked – about 3 minutes.

3 Add the broccoli, mushrooms, stock, noodles and soy sauce. Bring to the boil and then reduce the heat and simmer for 4 to 5 minutes until the broccoli is tender and the noodles are cooked.

4 To finish, add the coriander and lime juice and stir through.

SPINACH AND GOAT'S CHEESE WRAP

I've really got into using goat's cheese over the last few years. It is really delicious and delivers a huge flavour hit in a relatively small quantity. We are especially lucky to have so many great suppliers in Ireland.

PREP TIME 5 minutes

SERVES 1

a handful of baby spinach
leaves, washed and
dried
1 wholewheat wrap
1 small carrot, peeled and
finely grated
¼ to ½ small red onion,
very finely sliced
30g goat's cheese

1 Make a bed of spinach leaves on the wrap and sprinkle the grated carrot on top.

2 Use as much of the onion as you like, depending on taste (and if you're going to be in meetings in the afternoon!).

3 Crumble the goat's cheese finely on top and wrap or roll tightly.

PRAWN KEBABS WITH MIXED LEAVES

One of the easiest recipes in the book – delicious, easy and super-healthy too. Once you master this kebab you can use this method with other combos (chicken, beef, meaty fish and halloumi all work well) and you'll never be without a simple, quick, flavoursome lunch or light dinner.

PREP TIME 5 minutes

COOKING TIME 15 minutes

SERVES 2

juice of 1 lemon

½ tsp smoked paprika

1 clove of garlic, peeled
and finely chopped

200g jumbo prawns

1 red onion, peeled and
cut into chunks about
the same size as the
prawns

1 red pepper, cut into
chunks about the same
size as the prawns

freshly ground black
pepper

1 pack of wooden kebab
skewers, soaked in
water for at least half
an hour before cooking
(this stops them
burning)

1 Mix the lemon juice, paprika, garlic and black pepper (to taste) together in a bowl to make a marinade for the prawns.

2 Add the prawns to the bowl and coat thoroughly with the marinade. Leave in the fridge for at least 15 minutes. (If you have time, you can leave the prawns marinating for longer, but no more than a few hours.)

3 When you are ready to prepare the kebabs, take the skewers and thread with alternating prawns and pieces of onion and red pepper. Have each piece touching but not crammed together on the skewer. Leave a couple of centimetres bare at each end of the skewer. Brush each kebab with some of the marinade.

4 Heat the grill to medium and cook the kebabs for 15 minutes, turning occasionally, until they're golden and cooked through.

5 Serve with a side salad.

6 Once you have mastered this kebab, the sky is the limit in terms of what you can put on a skewer!





BAKED SWEET POTATO WITH ROASTED VEGETABLES

Sweet potato has never been more popular and it makes a great lunch dish, either hot or cold. Remember, you can eat the skin too – it's full of nutrients.

- 1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas mark 4.
- 2** Pierce the skins of the sweet potatoes, place in the middle of the preheated oven on one of the racks and bake for 1 hour.
- 3** Put the chopped pepper, courgette and aubergine into a roasting tray. Scatter the herbs on top and drizzle with the oil. Mix the veg to coat with the oil and spread out in a single layer on the tray. Put into the oven when the potatoes have been baking for 40 minutes (you can just nudge the potatoes to one side or put them on a higher or lower oven rack).
- 4** Check the sweet potatoes after 1 hour. They should be cooked through when you pierce them with a skewer or thin knife blade. The other veg should also be roasted.
- 5** Make a long cut or cross in the top of the potato, prise it open and pile the roasted veg on top.

PREP TIME 10 minutes

COOKING TIME 1 hour

SERVES 1

- 2 small sweet potatoes, scrubbed
- 1 red or yellow pepper, roughly chopped
- 1 courgette, sliced into 2cm chunks
- ½ aubergine, cut into 2cm cubes
- Small pinch of rosemary or thyme (dried or fresh, and finely chopped; you'll need less of the fresh herb)
- 1 to 2 tsp rapeseed oil

GO-TO SPICY SALAD

I love dishes with a bit of heat – always have! – so the salad dressing in this recipe has a bit of a kick to it. It’s a really simple salad that you can make up with whatever is in season. And you can add a protein of your choice to beef it up (so to speak!). Protein is essential for the growth and repair of your muscles and crucial for your body.

PREP TIME 10 minutes
SERVES 2

FOR THE SALAD

- 1 small head of baby gem lettuce, torn
- 1 medium carrot, peeled and finely grated
- 1 beetroot (vacuum-packed, not pickled), cut into large dice
- 1 small red pepper, finely diced
- cucumber, deseeded and diced
- 12 cherry tomatoes, halved
- ½ ripe avocado, peeled, halved, stoned and chopped (if you’re leaving the salad overnight, don’t prepare this until just before serving)
- a handful of sugarsnap peas, sliced lengthways
- 2 spring onions, finely sliced
- ¼ to ½ red onion, peeled and finely sliced
- ¼ small red cabbage, finely shredded
- ¼ small head of broccoli, florets only
- Add one of the following:
 - 2 x 160g tins tuna, drained (the dish in picture has tuna)
 - 2 cooked chicken breasts, chopped

- 6 cooked turkey slices, chopped (quantity based on meat sliced off the breast, not processed turkey slices)
- 1 x 400g tin chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 1 x 400g tin butter beans, drained and rinsed

FOR THE DRESSING

- juice of 2 limes
- 2 tsp soy sauce
- a few drops of Tabasco
- 2 tsp sesame oil
- sea salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

- 1 Mix your salad ingredients in a large bowl in whatever order you like – couldn’t be simpler. If you’re making the salad in advance it’s best to only cut and chop the avocado just before you’re ready to eat the salad, as it quickly turns brown when exposed to the air. Also, if you’re sensitive to raw onion, you can reduce or eliminate the red onion.
- 2 Mix the dressing ingredients in a small bowl with a fork or spoon. Keep in a little bottle or jar if you’re not serving straight away. Give the dressing a good shake before pouring over your salad.

MOROCCAN CHICKPEA AND CARROT SALAD

A great salad, full of colour, that is quick to make and seriously filling too!

- 1 In a large bowl mix the chickpeas, carrots, coriander or mint, flaked almonds and lettuce.

PREP TIME 10 minutes
SERVES 2

- 2 To make the dressing, mix the cumin, lemon juice, olive oil and garlic, and add the Tabasco if using.

FOR THE SALAD

- 1 x 200g tin chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 2 carrots, peeled and chopped into matchstick pieces or shredded
- a handful of fresh coriander or mint, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp flaked almonds, toasted
- 1 small head of baby gem lettuce, finely shredded

- 3 Dress the salad and serve immediately.

FOR THE DRESSING

- ½ tsp ground cumin
- juice of ½ lemon
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- ½ clove of garlic, peeled and crushed
- a dash of Tabasco (optional)

TWO SIMPLE STOCK RECIPES

It is unbelievably easy to make your own stock, and incredibly satisfying too! It's something I got into relatively recently. I do a big batch every few weeks and freeze it in smaller 500ml containers, so I always have a base for making my own soups. It's one of the few things I do that makes me feel properly cheffy in the kitchen!

1 tbsp rapeseed oil
2 onions, peeled and chopped
3 carrots, unpeeled, scrubbed and chopped
3 sticks of celery, chopped
3 cloves of garlic, peeled and chopped (optional)
2 litres water
2 bay leaves
a few sprigs of fresh thyme
a few sprigs of fresh parsley
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

VEGETABLE STOCK

- 1 Heat the oil in a large saucepan and add the onions, carrots, celery and garlic (if using) and fry over a medium heat for 5 to 10 minutes or until they're slightly softened.
- 2 Add the 2 litres of water, the bay leaves and the thyme and parsley. Bring to the boil and then reduce the heat and simmer on low for 45 to 50 minutes. Season to taste, then strain through a sieve and leave to cool.
- 3 You can store the stock in the freezer in 500ml quantities.

BEEF STOCK

- 1 Preheat the oven to 200°C/400°F/gas mark 6.
- 2 Rub the oil over the bones and chopped up vegetables and place in a large roasting tin. Roast off the bones, onions, carrots and celery for about 45 minutes.
- 3 Remove from the oven and put the roasted bones and vegetables into a large saucepan over a high heat with the bay leaf, thyme and parsley and the 3 litres of water and season to taste. Bring to the boil and then reduce the heat, simmering gently on a low heat for 5 to 6 hours. Skim any scum off the surface a few times during the first hour.
- 4 Use a slotted spoon to remove the bones and vegetables (you can bin them). Strain the liquid into a large container through a fine sieve and leave to cool. Scrape off any fat that solidifies on top and bin it (don't put it down the sink as it will block your pipes!).
- 5 You can store the stock in the freezer in 500ml quantities.

1.5kg beef bones (chopped up, the butcher can do this for you if you don't have a cleaver)
2 onions, peeled and chopped
2 to 3 carrots, unpeeled, scrubbed and chopped
3 sticks of celery, chopped
2 tbsp rapeseed oil
1 bay leaf
a sprig of fresh thyme
a sprig of fresh parsley
3 litres water
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste