

Whole Food Family Favorites



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a FREE e-cookbook
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This is a FREE e-book. Please share it with anyone you think may benefit from a collection of nourishing recipes featuring whole foods or who just enjoys cooking at home. It can be downloaded from www.nourishingjoy.com.

Whole Foods for the Whole Family

This small collection of recipes from NourishingJoy.com is put together with JOY in the hopes that they will NOURISH you and your family deeply.

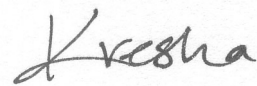
All the recipes here were developed on the principles of traditional eating practices, which optimize and take advantage of the nutrients that exist in whole foods, thus allowing for easy digestion and maximum absorption of nutrients.

The guiding principles of this cookbook thus come from traditional food preparation methods:

- ☞ **Grains, beans, nuts, and seeds** should be soaked, sprouted, or soured for maximum digestibility and nutrient absorption.
- ☞ **Fats** should be unrefined and full of vitamins, such as butter, coconut oil, lard, and olive oil. Fats are essential to proper cognitive function and when eaten properly, they help regulate the body's systems and even assist in helping to shed body fat.
- ☞ **Sugar** in its refined state should be avoided completely—there are many natural sweeteners that still have their minerals and vitamins intact that can sweeten drinks and baked goods instead.
- ☞ **Meat, eggs, and dairy** should be from grass-fed animals who have been raised on pasture. This increases their nutrient profile significantly and even adds fatty acids that don't exist in conventionally-raised animals, such as the potent cancer fighting Conjugated Linoleic Acid (CLA).
- ☞ **Fermented and cultured foods**, such as yogurt, sourdough bread, and sauerkraut, should be consumed daily. Fermenting optimizes nutrient availability, increases the vitamin content of many foods, and is an excellent way of preserving fresh foods.

Basically, eat natural, whole foods sourced locally, prepare them well, and enjoy them unabashedly!

May you and your family be nourished in body and soul.



MORROCAN BEEF

with minted yogurt and preserved lemons

This is one of our family's all time favorite meat dishes. It works extremely well for lunch, dinner, or a summer picnic! Serve with Greek salad and sprouted rice pilaf or with sourdough pita bread. The preserved lemons are served as a condiment – the lacto-fermentation process makes the rinds soft and edible and the flavor accompanies the beef superbly.

for the beef:

2 lbs beef top sirloin, thinly sliced
5 cloves garlic, minced
2 teaspoon dried oregano
1 small onion, minced
1 teaspoon curry powder
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 tablespoon coarse sea salt
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 cup olive oil

for the minted yogurt:

1 cup yogurt
1/2 cucumber, grated
zest of one lemon
1/2 teaspoon dried mint

for the preserved lemons:

8-10 Meyer lemons* (approx. 2-3 lbs),
scrubbed very well
1/2 cup coarse sea salt
2-3 extra lemons for juicing

Quart-size canning jar, sterilized

**If you cannot find Meyer lemons in your area, regular lemons may be substituted.*

Serves 4-6

For the Beef:

Place sliced sirloin in a large glass or ceramic bowl. Add all dry marinade ingredients and toss to distribute evenly. Pour in olive oil and place in the refrigerator to marinate for 1-8 hours.

To cook, heat a large griddle or skillet on medium-high heat. When the pan is hot, remove meat from marinade, discarding the marinade, and distribute in one layer on the pan. If all the meat does not fit in one layer, sear in two batches. Sear for 2-3 minutes on each side, being careful not to overcook the meat.

Serve hot, cold, or at room temperature.

For the Minted Yogurt:

Combine all ingredients in a small bowl and stir together. Let sit for at least half-an-hour before serving to meld the flavors.

For the Preserved Lemons:

Quarter the lemons, but don't slice all the way through the lemon on either cut. Leave all four quarters connected at the base.

Pry each lemon open and sprinkle salt generously all over the inside.

Pack the lemons tightly in the jar, 3-4 lemons at a time. After each addition, sprinkle a teaspoon of salt over the lemons and use a wooden mallet to tamp them into place, pounding lightly until the juice is extracted and begins to cover the lemons. Fill the jar up to the neck, tamping after each addition. Once you've reached the neck, top with an extra tablespoon of salt and tamp to make sure the lemons are completely covered with lemon juice. Add more freshly squeezed lemon juice if necessary.

Cover the jar with a tea towel or set the lid on loosely and leave on the counter for 1-2 weeks.

SHRIMP - LEEK QUICHE

with a sourdough crust

Sourdough starter has many uses and when it's not busy raising bread, it enhances other baked goods in both flavor and nutrition. This pie crust is no exception - using sourdough makes the flour more digestible, the grain's nutrients more bio-available, and the flavor delicious. The technique of rolling it with butter ensures a flaky crust.

for the crust:

1 ½ cups sourdough starter
2 – 3 cups flour, enough to make a stiff dough*
1/4 cup butter, lard, or coconut oil
1/2 teaspoon unrefined sea salt

**different flours have different hydration rates, so this amount is an estimate. If you use spelt, whole wheat, kamut, teff, or other whole grain, your amount may differ.*

for the filling:

3 eggs
1 1/2 cups heavy cream and/or whole milk
3 tablespoon butter
2 shallots
1 leek, including the green
2 cloves garlic
4 oz cream cheese
1/2 - 1 lb shrimp
salt and pepper to taste

Serves 4-6

For the crust:

At least 8 hours before you want to bake the quiche, combine the sourdough starter and the flour to get a very stiff dough. Cover with a towel and let sit at room temperature until about an hour before you are ready to prepare the meal. One hour prior to rolling, put the dough in the refrigerator to stiffen.

On a floured surface, roll the dough out into a large circle. Cut the butter into small pieces and sprinkle half of it plus half the salt over the dough. Fold the dough over and roll it out again. Add the rest of the butter and salt as you did the first time, fold it over, roll it out, and continue to do this until the butter is well incorporated into the dough. Feel free to add flour at any point if the dough is sticky.

When the butter is fully worked into the dough, roll the dough into a circle about 1/8" - 1/4" thick. Transfer the dough to a 9" springform pan, patting the dough onto the edges to stay upright and tearing off excess outer pieces to patch any uneven sides on the inside. Bake crust for 5-10 minutes in a 375 Fahrenheit oven until firm but not browned.

**If you're in a hurry, you can skip the 8-hour soak, but you will miss out on the health benefits of letting the dough sit. Chill the dough for 20-30 minutes before rolling and adding the fat as before.*

For the filling:

Sauté the shallots and leek in the butter over medium heat until soft. Set aside.

Sauté the shrimp over medium heat until cooked through, then add cream cheese. Cook until cheese is softened enough to stir the shrimp into it, stirring occasionally. Set aside.

Beat eggs lightly in a medium bowl, then add heavy cream and whisk briefly. Add the leek-shallot mixture and the shrimp-cream cheese mixture and stir to incorporate, blending the cream cheese and the egg-cream mixture as much as possible. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Pour into the prepared crust and bake at 375 degrees Fahrenheit for 35-45 minutes until the custard is set and jiggles when shaken lightly.

Note: This is a great "clean out the refrigerator" quiche. Asparagus, broccoli, mushrooms, deli meat, and any white cheese from Brie to asiago would be a welcome addition!

QUICK TANDOORI-STYLE CHICKEN

*This is an excellent meal for days when you're in a hurry. Prep the chicken in the morning and all you'll have to do is pop it in the oven at the end of the day.
Serve over sprouted rice or quinoa with sautéed vegetables on the side.*

for the marinade:

1 small onion, quartered
3 garlic cloves, smashed
1 2-inch piece of fresh ginger, peeled and grated
3/4 cup plain yogurt
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
2 teaspoon unrefined sea salt
1/2 teaspoon turmeric
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/4 teaspoon cayenne
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground coriander

8 skinless, boneless chicken thighs or
skinless bone-in chicken legs

Serves 4

Combine onion, garlic, ginger, yogurt, lemon juice, salt, and spices in a blender or a food processor and pulse until smooth.

Make 3 diagonal 1/4" cuts in each chicken thigh. Place chicken and yogurt marinade in a large sealable plastic bag and turn to coat. Refrigerate, turning bag occasionally, for at least 8 hours.

Line a sheet pan with foil and oil a cookie cooling rack or a broiler rack that fits in the sheet pan. Preheat the broiler. Remove chicken from the marinade and arrange on broiler rack. Discard marinade. Broil 5-6 inches from heat, turning once, until just cooked through and tips are starting to blacken, 12-17 minutes total.

Garnish with cilantro, if desired.

If you'd like extra sauce for serving, add an extra 1/4 cup yogurt when making the marinade and once the marinade is mixed (before the chicken is added), set the extra 1/4 cup marinade aside. At serving time, heat gently over medium-low heat and spoon over sprouted rice or quinoa as desired.

PORK TENDERLOIN WITH SPICED CRANBERRY SAUCE

When we eat pork that has grown up on pasture, the meat—more specifically, the fat—is full of vitamins our bodies need, most notably Vitamin D from being outside in the sun. Thus, this is a great dish for wintertime, just when we tend to need a Vitamin D boost. The cranberries in the sauce are both tangy and sweet and oh-so-good and add a decent dose of Vitamin C.

for the tenderloin:

2 teaspoons lard
2 lbs pork tenderloin
2-4 tablespoons herbes de Provence
salt and pepper

for the sauce:

3 cups fresh or frozen cranberries
1 cup red wine and/or pure cranberry juice
2 large oranges, juiced and zested
1/2 cup maple syrup (more to taste)
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
salt and pepper to taste

Serves 4-6

For the tenderloin:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit.

Heat lard in a large skillet over medium-high heat until the skillet is very hot. Rub tenderloin generously with herbes de Provence, salt, and pepper, then sear on all sides until deep brown, approximately 1 minute per side.

Note: Fully seared meat will come loose from the pan easily when you pull on it. If there is still meat sticking to the pan, just wait another minute or so.

Transfer the meat to foil-lined baking sheet and tent with another sheet of foil. Roast for 10-15 minutes until the meat has an internal temperature between 145 and 155. Remove from oven and let stand 10 minutes before serving.

For the sauce:

Combine all ingredients in a medium saucepan and bring to a boil over medium-high heat, then reduce heat to medium low and let simmer for 10-15 minutes or until most of the cranberries have popped.

CREAMY LEEK AND KALE SOUP

A hearty soup to warm the body and soul on a cold winter day. The butter or lard, if sourced from a pastured animal, provides a needed dose of Vitamin D during the dark months, the vegetables provide an array of vitamins, and the chicken stock provides gelatin, minerals, and glucosamine, which are essential for fighting off the illnesses that tend to surround us in winter.

3 tablespoons pastured butter or lard
1 tablespoon pastured butter
1 leek, both white and green parts,
coarsely chopped
1 onion, coarsely chopped
3 sprigs fresh thyme
1/2 cup white wine
1 celeriac, peeled and coarsely diced
1 potato, peeled and coarsely diced
6 cups homemade chicken stock
2 stalks of kale or chard, de-stemmed and
coarsely chopped
1 cup whipping cream, preferably raw
Salt and pepper to taste
Dash of fresh nutmeg

Serves 4

Melt 3 tablespoons butter in a medium stockpot over medium heat. Once the butter has melted and just begun to bubble, add the leeks, onion, and thyme and sauté until onion is translucent.

Add the wine and reduce by two-thirds. Stir in the celeriac and potato. Add the stock and bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer until the celeriac is nearly tender, about 20-25 minutes. Toss in the kale or chard and cook for another 10-15 minutes.

Using an immersible blender or a food processor, blend the soup into a purée. Either return to the heat or refrigerate to serve later.

When you're ready to serve, heat the purée, then stir in the remaining tablespoon of butter and the cream and heat over low heat. Season with salt, pepper, and nutmeg.

ROASTED RED PEPPER SHRIMP BISQUE

Shellfish is one of the few naturally-occurring sources of iodine, an essential mineral for endocrine health. Here, shrimp is combined with carotenoid-rich roasted red peppers for a slightly smoky, lusciously creamy soup that I love through the spring and summer.

2-3 large red bell peppers
2 tablespoons pastured butter
1 lb shrimp, wild-caught
1/2 cup tomato paste*
2-4 cups homemade chicken broth
Pinch unrefined sea salt
a few tablespoons of whipping cream,
preferably raw
sour cream (optional), for garnish

**check out NourishingJoy.com for an easy tutorial on how to make tomato paste from scratch!*

Serves 4

Roast bell peppers using one of two methods:

A. Slice peppers into thick strips, then sear on a grill over medium-high heat. Flip strips once to sear on both sides. Leave strips on the grill for 15-20 minutes until softened and slightly blackened.

B. Cut pepper into halves or quarters, then place on a baking sheet and place in a 425 degree oven for 15-20 minutes until softened and slightly blackened, flipping once during roasting.

Remove skins after roasted if desired. (This will keep the bisque from being flecked with black char.)

Melt butter in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Sauté shrimp until thoroughly cooked through and liquid is mostly evaporated. Add tomato paste and sea salt and cook for a minute or two.

Place bell peppers in a food processor or blender and pulse a few times to roughly chop. Add the shrimp mixture and process until finely pureed. While the machine is running, slowly add two cups of chicken broth and process until smooth.

To serve, heat bisque over medium heat, whisking in more chicken broth if a thinner consistency is desired. Finish with a few tablespoons of cream if desired and top with a dollop of sour cream.

PASTEL DE CHOCLO

This Chilean corn and meat pie is part South American-shepherd's pie, part corn pudding, and a just a touch crème brûlée. If your family likes ground beef casseroles but you're looking for a new version to spice things up, this is a great way to go. Soaking the corn and the flour help to make the dish more flavorful, more digestible, and more nutritious.

1 pound fresh or frozen corn
1/4 cup cornmeal
2 tablespoons whole wheat or spelt flour
1 tablespoon honey or maple syrup
milk, as needed

1 pound ground beef
3 tablespoons butter or bacon grease
1 onion, finely chopped
2-3 cloves garlic, minced
1 tablespoon paprika
1 teaspoon cumin
1 teaspoon dried oregano
salt and pepper, to taste
1 cup water or beef stock
1 small potato, peeled and diced very fine

1/2 cup black or kalamata olives
4 hard-boiled eggs, sliced (optional)
1/2 cup golden raisins (optional)

1/4 cup unrefined cane sugar

Serves 4

About 6-8 hours before you want to make the dish, place the corn, cornmeal, flour, and honey in a food processor and process until well puréed. With the blade running, add the milk a little at a time until the corn forms a thick batter. Let this mixture stand at room temperature until you are ready to assemble the casserole.

Preheat oven to 375°F and grease a large casserole dish. Heat the butter in a large sauté pan over medium heat. Add the onion and sauté until it has just begun to soften. Stir in the garlic and sauté until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add the ground beef, paprika, cumin, oregano, salt and pepper and cook until the beef is just cooked through, 6-8 minutes.

Add the water and potato and bring to a simmer. Simmer for another 8-10 minutes until the potato is very soft, then stir well.

Spread the beef mixture in the greased casserole dish. Make a layer with the olives, eggs, and raisins, then top with the soaked corn purée and spread out evenly over the dish.

Set the dish in the oven and bake for 30-40 minutes, or until bubbling and golden brown on top. Sprinkle the sugar over the top and caramelize with a blow torch (like when making crème brûlée) or set under the broiler for 1-2 minutes. Serve immediately.

Note: In Chile the hard-boiled eggs and the raisins are an essential part of making an authentic Pastel. However, many North American taste buds, mine included, are not crazy about those flavors as part of a savory meat dish, so in this version, I have marked those ingredients as optional. Also, a common addition in Chile is a handful of chopped fresh basil leaves. I like to purée them into the corn mixture.

PUPUSAS

with curtido

Pupusas are the national food of El Salvador and curtido is the traditional accompaniment, similar to sauerkraut or kimchi. There are many reasons to love pupusas: they're easy finger food, great for lunches at home, work, or school, and they're fantastic when you're trying to keep a tight grocery budget. Make sure to make a double batch and freeze the extras—they reheat quickly in the oven.

for the pupusas:

2 cups masa harina
1 1/2 cups water
Pinch of sea salt

1/2 cup salty cheese, shredded (Monterey Jack, cheddar, or dry salted cheese curds, crumbled)
1/4 cup refried beans (optional)
1/4 cup shredded pork (optional)
1 tsp loroco* or 1/2 tsp. fresh oregano, chopped (optional)

for the curtido:

1 small head of cabbage (approx. 2 pounds), shredded
1 red or yellow onion, thinly sliced
4 carrots, peeled and shredded
1 chile de árbol, seeded and finely minced
1 teaspoon oregano
1 tablespoon sea salt

**Loroco, a small flower bud with both herbal and culinary uses, grows only in specific regions of Central America. Look for it in cans in Latin markets.*

Makes approximately 12 pupusas

For the pupusas:

Several hours before you want to cook, stir the masa harina, water, and salt together in a medium size bowl. The dough should be wet enough to be cohesive but not stick to your hands, neither should it be crumbly. Cover and set aside at room temperature.

To make the pupusas, break off pieces of masa about 1 1/2 inches in diameter and shape each one into a thick, flat disk in the palm of your hand. (Dip your hands in water to keep the dough from sticking.) Make an indentation in the middle of the disk and place a couple of tablespoons of cheese and/or beans, pork, loroco, or oregano in the hole. Bring the sides up over the filling, making it into a ball once again. Now flatten the ball once again in the palm of your hand, and set aside. Repeat with the remaining masa.

Heat a griddle on the stove over medium heat for several minutes. Place the pupusas on the hot griddle until they begin to brown, then flip them to brown the other side, about 4-5 minutes per side.

These freeze very well - just let them cool after cooking and place them in a well-sealed container in the freezer for up to a month. To reheat, preheat the oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit and warm them for 8-10 minutes. No need to thaw them first.

For the curtido:

Place all the ingredients in a large bowl. With very clean hands, knead and massage the mixture until the vegetables begin to go limp and they release their juices.

Pack the mix into a sterilized mason jar, pushing down on it as you go to release more juice. If the vegetables are not covered in brine once you reach the top, add more salt water to completely submerge them.

Cover with a clean tea towel. Set aside at room temperature for 10-14 days, adding a bit of salt water each day if the top vegetables become dry. Refrigerate when the flavor is to your liking.

BLACK BEAN, TOMATO, AND CORN SALAD

with kombucha vinaigrette

Lovely in the summer— and with a probiotic kick! Make it into a meal by adding avocado and bacon, a combination made in heaven. Bacon and avocado have just the right amount of healthy fats to make this salad into a nourishing and satisfying meal-in-a-bowl.

for the salad:

1 pound dried black beans
1/2 lb cherry tomatoes, sliced in half
2 cups fresh corn kernels
1/2 red onion, chopped
A few stems of cilantro, chopped
A large handful of black olives, pitted and roughly chopped

1 large avocado, diced (optional)
1/2 lb bacon, cooked and broken into pieces (optional)

for the vinaigrette:

1/4 cup kombucha
1 shallot, minced
1 tsp. minced fresh herbs (tarragon, thyme, sage, or chives)
Pinch of sea salt
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
3/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil

Serves 4

For the salad:

In a large pot, cover beans with cold water. Set aside and let them sit for 8-12 hours. Drain beans and add fresh water to completely cover. Bring to a boil and simmer for 1 hour until beans are tender. Drain and let them cool.

Place all ingredients, except for the bacon and avocado, in a large bowl. Pour half of the vinaigrette over and toss to mix. Add more vinaigrette, salt, and pepper as desired, then top with bacon pieces and diced avocado.

For the vinaigrette:

Place all ingredients in a small bowl or jar with a tight-fitting lid and whisk or shake until everything is well emulsified.

WILD SALMON SALAD

with fresh herb aioli

Fresh, wild salmon is one of the best sources of the fish oils that help maintain healthy brain and nerve function. Caught in season, its flavor is rich and delectable. While this salad is most easily made with filets, there's no reason to use the premium cuts for this recipe - as long as the finished fish is free of bones, some of the "lesser" cuts are ideal for this purpose. Also, if you want to increase your intake of raw fish, as those luscious fatty acids are most bio-available when the fish is raw, cure the salmon into lox then dice it finely for this recipe. (See how to cure lox on page 14.)

for the salad:

1 lb wild salmon, cooked and flaked
4 scallions, diced
1 cucumber, diced
1/2 red onion, minced
2 teaspoons lemon juice
1 teaspoon Dijon-style mustard
1/2 teaspoon sea salt

2 tablespoons fresh dill, coarsely
chopped

for the aioli:

2 egg yolks
1 clove garlic, chopped
2 teaspoons apple cider or red wine
vinegar
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 teaspoon Dijon-style mustard
1/4 packed cup fresh dill, snipped
dash cayenne pepper
dash unrefined sea salt
1/2 cup unrefined extra virgin olive oil
*(other cold-pressed oils may be
substituted if the flavor of the olive oil is
too overpowering for your taste)*

Serves 2-4

For the aioli:

Combine all the ingredients except for the oil in a food processor. Pulse several times to combine ingredients, then let the motor run while slowly pouring in the olive oil. Start with just a few drops and continue pouring with a very fine stream - it should take 2-3 minutes. When you're finished, the mixture should be well emulsified and creamy.

For the salmon salad:

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl and toss to combine.

Spoon half of the aioli over the salmon mixture and toss again. Add more to taste. Top with coarsely chopped fresh dill.

Serve over slices of baguette, on top of a bed of lettuce, or simply enjoy straight with a spoon.

LOX PIZZA

A lovely pizza that's perfect for a summer picnic or buffet table. It's basically a grown-up version of lox and bagels and it always disappears quickly in our house. I enjoy it best with a glass of white wine, but homebrewed ginger ale, fermented lemonade, and citrus water kefir are also welcome accompaniments.

for the lox:

1 cup coarse, unrefined sea salt
1/2 cup dill, peppercorns, and juniper
2 filets of wild salmon, skin-on

for the pizza crust:

1 1/2 cups of sourdough starter, recently fed
1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil or coconut oil
1/2 teaspoon coarse unrefined sea salt
1 1/2 cups of flour (all-purpose, whole wheat, or spelt)
2 teaspoons caraway seeds
1/2 red onion, sliced very thin

for the pizza:

1/2 cup sour cream
2 tablespoons fresh dill, coarsely chopped
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
1 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest
2-3 tablespoons capers
15-20 lox slices
1/2 red onion, sliced very thin (optional)

*Makes 1 pizza
Serves 2-4*

Make the lox:

Mix the salt and the spices together in a bowl until evenly mixed. Place a long strip of plastic wrap on a baking sheet just long enough to accommodate the salmon. Place one filet of salmon face-up on the plastic wrap. Pour half of the salt mixture over the filet, then lay the other filet face-down on top of the first.

Pour the rest of the salt mixture over the filets and pull the plastic wrap up and over the salmon as tightly as you can. If the filets are small enough, place the wrapped filets in a resealable plastic bag—you want the fish to not lose any of its brine.

Place the salmon in the refrigerator and weight it with a plate or brick on top of it. Cure the salmon for 3 days, turning the salmon stack over once a day.

To serve, brush off the salt and spices and slice thinly (for this pizza) or dice (for the wild salmon salad).

Make the pizza crust:

6-10 hours before you'd like to make your pizza, pour the starter, oil, and salt into the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with a dough hook. Add 1 cup of flour and the caraway seeds. Knead, adding more flour a tablespoon at a time, until the dough is soft but no longer sticky.

Place the dough in a lightly greased bowl, cover with plastic wrap, and leave to sour until you are ready to prepare your pizza.

About 1 hour before you want to eat, preheat your oven to 400 degrees. Roll out the dough to whatever shape fits your pan or baking stone best and poke it several times with a fork. Scatter the thinly sliced red onion on top. Bake it for about 8-9 minutes, just until nicely browned. Cool.

For the pizza:

Stir the dill, lemon juice, and lemon zest into the sour cream. Spread evenly over the cooled crust. Lay pieces of lox all over the pizza, followed by the capers and more red onion slices to taste. Cut into wedges and serve.

CHICKEN NUGGETS

with homemade barbecue sauce

This is a frugal way to have nutritious finger food on hand, for adults and wee ones alike, and they're super-easy to freeze (so make extra!) Chicken breast works best for this recipe because it is the driest of the chicken parts—if you want to substitute cheaper cuts of chicken or are deboning a whole chicken, take the time to trim the meat well or the mixture may fall apart as you mold them. And don't be put off by the long list of ingredients for the barbecue sauce - it's not difficult to make and it is glossy, thick, smooth, and deeply flavorful.

for the chicken nuggets:

2 chicken breasts
5-6 slices of bacon (optional)
1-2 teaspoons fresh tarragon, to taste
Pinch of unrefined sea salt
Fresh ground black pepper

1 cup sourdough bread crumbs
1 cup sprouted wheat flour
2 eggs, beaten with 1 teaspoon water

for the barbecue sauce:

1 onion, coarsely chopped
1 cup ketchup
2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
1/4 cup blackstrap molasses
1/4 teaspoon hot sauce (more to taste)
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1 1/2 teaspoons liquid smoke
2 tablespoons olive oil or coconut oil, melted
2 cloves of garlic, minced
1 teaspoon chili powder
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
2 tablespoons whey or sauerkraut brine (optional)

makes approximately 18 nuggets & approximately 1 1/2 cups barbecue sauce

For the chicken nuggets:

Cut the raw chicken breasts into chunks and coarsely chop the raw bacon. Place in a food processor with the tarragon, salt, and pepper and process until smooth.

Using moistened hands, form the chicken/bacon mix into nuggets no more than 3/4 inches thick. Bread each nugget by dipping it first in the flour, then the eggs, and lastly rolling it in the bread crumbs. Shake off the excess after each step. Place breaded nuggets on a parchment-paper lined baking sheet.

To save nuggets for later, freeze on the baking sheet, then transfer to a long-term freezer storage container. To bake immediately, place the baking sheet in a preheated 340°F oven and bake for 15-18 minutes. Test for doneness by pricking one nugget with a fork - the juices should run clear.

For the barbecue sauce:

Place the onion in a blender with 3-4 tablespoons of water and blend until slushy. Strain mixture through a cheesecloth, squeezing it until you obtain 1/2 cup juice. Discard solids.

Whisk ketchup, onion juice, and other wet ingredients in a medium bowl, omitting oil and whey. Set aside.

Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add in garlic and spices and cook until fragrant. Whisk in wet ingredient mixture and bring to a boil, then reduce heat to medium-low and simmer gently until the mixture thickens, about 20-30 minutes. Cool to room temperature before serving.

To give the sauce a probiotic kick, stir in the whey or sauerkraut brine and let sit at room temperature for 1-2 days, then refrigerate.

QUINOA AND WHITE BEAN "HUMMUS" *with sourdough flatbread*

Quinoa is an ancient grain that is high in protein and B-vitamins and thus, this is a great frugal way to have a satisfying meal without meat, especially in the summer. Serve it with a Mediterranean antipasto platter filled with olives, cheeses, thick yogurt, and vegetables for a finger-licking good meal. Quinoa is also a valuable food for nursing mothers, as it helps maintain an ample supply of milk.

for the hummus:

1/2 cup rinsed quinoa
1 1/4 cup warm water, divided
1 tablespoon fresh whey or lemon juice
1 medium carrot, cut in large chunks
6 scallions, thinly sliced
16 ounces great northern beans, drained and rinsed
1/4 cup plain dried breadcrumbs
1 tablespoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt
Ground pepper
2 tablespoons olive oil

for the flatbread:

1 cup sourdough starter, recently fed
2 cups wheat or spelt flour
1 teaspoon unrefined sea salt
3 teaspoons melted butter or extra virgin olive oil
A few tablespoons milk (as needed)

Serves 4-6

For the hummus:

In a small saucepan, combine the quinoa with 1/2 cup warm water and whey or lemon juice. Let sit for 8-12 hours. To cook, add 3/4 cup warm water and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium low, and cook until all the liquid is absorbed, 8-10 minutes. Set aside.

In a food processor, pulse carrot until finely chopped. Add cooked quinoa, half the scallions, beans, breadcrumbs, cumin, salt, and 1/4 teaspoon pepper; pulse until combined, then with the motor running, pour in the olive oil. The final mixture should be somewhat smooth. Sprinkle with remaining scallions and set aside in the refrigerator until ready to serve.

For the flatbread:

Combine the sourdough starter, flour, salt, and butter in a large bowl and knead to combine. Add milk as needed to make the dough into a stiff, cohesive ball. (Different flours and different starters have varying hydration rates, so the amount of milk needed will vary accordingly..) Cover and set aside for 4-8 hours.

To cook the flatbread, divide the dough into 10-12 portions. Roll each portion into a ball, cover, and let sit for 10 minutes. Meanwhile, heat a dry griddle over medium heat.

Using a rolling pin, roll each portion into a flat disk, like a tortilla, 1/8" - 1/4" thick. Cook each flatbread on a dry hot griddle until slightly browned and it starts to puff or bubble, about 30 seconds per side. Place cooked flatbread under a dishtowel until you are ready to serve.

To serve:

Spread quinoa hummus on each flatbread or use as a dip.

MAMA'S MULTI-GRAIN PANCAKES

Start these pancakes the night before as the batter needs time to soak. By using an acidic medium (either buttermilk or yogurt), you are breaking down the acids in the grains and making them both more digestible and more nutritious.

2 cups buttermilk or yogurt
1/2 cup old-fashioned rolled oats
1 1/2 cups whole wheat or spelt flour
1/4 cup barley flour
1/4 cup cornmeal
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon sea salt
1 teaspoon cinnamon
2 large eggs
1/4 cup unrefined cane sugar or sucanat
4-8 tablespoons butter or coconut oil,
melted and cooled (*the more butter
used, the softer the pancake*)
2 teaspoons vanilla

Serves 4

8-12 hours before you want to make the pancakes, whisk the flours, oats, and cornmeal together in a large bowl. Stir in the buttermilk or yogurt, then cover and set aside at room temperature until cooking time.

When you're ready to cook, stir in the rest of the ingredients and add a few tablespoons of milk, if necessary, to thin the batter.

Heat a griddle over medium heat for several minutes and preheat the oven to 200 degrees Fahrenheit. When the griddle is hot, cook the pancakes in batches and keep them warm in the oven until you are ready to serve.

BREAKFAST BREAD PUDDING WITH APPLES AND APRICOTS

I absolutely love both bread pudding and apple pie, so I was happy to finally discover a way to have a sugar-free version of both of them at breakfast. Also, most of the members of my family don't eat the cupjes (ends) of the bread loaves, so this is a great way to use them up. Prepare it at least 12 hours before serving - starting it the night before is a great idea.

1/2 cup sulphur-free dried apricots
5 cups coarsely diced apples
4 cups day-old sourdough bread, torn into large cubes
1/4 cup fresh or dried cranberries
2 tablespoons almond butter
2 tablespoons butter, melted
1 cup milk
2 teaspoons cinnamon
Pinch ground cardamom
Dash of nutmeg
Dash of cloves

Maple syrup (optional)
Honey (optional)
Yogurt (optional)
Berries (optional)
Chopped nuts (optional)

Serves 4-6

In a small saucepan, bring diced apples and 1/2 cup water to a boil and then simmer very gently over medium-low heat until the apples are soft but they still hold their shape. Discard any remaining water.

Place dried apricots in a separate small saucepan and cover with water. Bring to a boil over high heat, then simmer until the fruits are tender and most of the water has been absorbed. Transfer to a blender or food processor and blend until smooth (refrain from adding extra water).

Add almond butter, butter, milk, and spices to the food processor and blend again until smooth.

Place the bread cubes in a square, buttered baking dish. Top with cranberries and the reserved diced apples. Pour the apricot mixture over all the bread. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

To bake, bake uncovered in a 350 degree Fahrenheit oven for 30 minutes or until golden brown on the top.

Serve warm with toppings of your choice.

HOT MUESLI

Make sure you set the oats to soak the night before. In the morning, this hearty oatmeal comes together in a jiffy. The reason for soaking the oats ahead of time is simple: almost all grains, including oats, contain phytic acid, an enzyme inhibitor that keeps the grain from sprouting until the proper time of germination. However, it also inhibits us from absorbing many nutrients found in the grain, and a diet that includes lots of grains that aren't soured, sprouted, or soaked ahead of time can lead to mineral deficiencies and bone loss.

2 cups rolled oats
4 cups warm water, divided
4 tablespoons fresh whey or lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon unrefined sea salt
1 cup dried or chopped fresh fruit
(currants, raisins, dried cranberries,
chopped dried apricots, apples, berries,
etc)
a sprinkling of ground nutmeg
a sprinkling of ground cinnamon

Fresh milk (optional)
1/2 cup yogurt (optional)

Serves 3-4

The night before, combine the oats, 2 cups water, and whey or lemon juice in a saucepan. Set aside at room temperature for at least seven hours.

To cook, add the remaining 2 cups of water, sea salt, and fruit and bring to a boil, then simmer gently over low heat until the desired consistency is reached, about 5-8 minutes.

Stir in spices and fresh milk or yogurt to serve.

Variation:

To serve this cold, combine the rolled oats with 1 cup of yogurt, 2-3 tablespoons of orange juice, the dried fruit, and the spices in a large bowl and stir together. Chill overnight.

To serve, divide into bowls and garnish with almonds, grated apple, and other fresh fruit.

BEEF PÂTÉ

I make this recipe once every week or two, as it never lasts long in our house. The kids eat it for lunch and I love it as a snack with crackers. Beef offal, such as liver, is one of the most potent, nutrient-dense foods available and is especially beneficial for pregnant and lactating women.

1 lb. pastured beef liver, cut into pieces
2 tablespoons clarified butter
6 oz. regular or clarified butter, at room temperature
1 small red onion, chopped
1/2 cup red wine
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 teaspoon dijon mustard
1 sprig fresh rosemary
1 sprig fresh thyme
1 tablespoon lemon juice
unrefined sea salt
cracked black pepper

Makes approximately 24 appetizer-size servings

Sauté the liver and onions in 2 tablespoons of the clarified butter until the livers are browned and the onions are tender.

Add wine, garlic, mustard, herbs and lemon juice and cook uncovered until most of the liquid has evaporated.

Cool and blend in the food processor until smooth, along with the remaining butter. Add salt to taste.

If the pâté is dry and crumbly rather than smooth and creamy, add more butter one tablespoon at a time.

Place the pâté in a serving dish and grind a generous amount of cracked pepper over the top.

OLIVE TAPENADE

If you want to get an authentic feel for making this tapenade recipe, you can try blending it with a mortar and pestle, but I personally recommend the speed and ease of a food processor. Serve as part of an antipasto platter or mounded on rounds of sourdough. It's a great option to have out for guests when you're still putting the final touches on dinner.

2 cups pitted olives, such as Valencia or Kalamata
2 tablespoons capers
2 anchovies (optional)
1 clove garlic, crushed
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon lemon juice
Unrefined sea salt
Fresh ground black pepper

Makes approximately 1 cup

Place olives, capers, anchovies, and crushed garlic in a food processor and process until finely chopped. Empty into a large bowl and stir in the olive oil and lemon juice and season to taste with salt and pepper. (The anchovies may have made the dish salty enough.)

Place the tapenade in a jar and cover with a thin layer of olive oil.

Keeps in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

SOURDOUGH PRETZEL BITES

with honey mustard

Ooooo, these are yummy! These are a great rainy day project with the kids and a fun snack to have while you're playing a board game or watching a movie. Careful - they're addictive!

for the pretzel bites:

1 1/2 cups sourdough starter, active and recently fed
1 cup hot water
2 tablespoons butter
3 tablespoons unrefined cane sugar
2 teaspoons unrefined sea salt
5 cups all purpose, whole wheat, or spelt flour

coarse unrefined sea salt

for the honey mustard:

5 tablespoons raw honey
3 tablespoons smooth Dijon mustard
1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
1 tablespoon kombucha

OR

5 tablespoons raw honey
3 tablespoons smooth Dijon mustard
2 tablespoons fresh whey

Makes approximately 120-150 pretzel bites & 1/2 cup honey mustard

For the pretzel bites:

Add the butter, sugar, and salt to the cup of hot water and stir to dissolve. Cool to lukewarm.

Put the starter in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the dough hook. Add the lukewarm water mixture. Add flour, 1/2 cup at a time. The dough will be very very stiff.

Place the dough in a greased bowl, turn to coat, and cover. Let sit for 2-4 hours.

When you're ready to bake, bring a pot of water to a rapid boil, then reduce to a steady simmer. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit.

Break off pieces of the dough about the size of a large egg. Roll each piece into a rope about 1 inch in diameter, then cut the rope into 1-inch sections. Drop as many pretzel bites as will fit without touching into the water and cook about 30 seconds after they have risen to the top. (Or longer for a chewier pretzel.)

Remove with a slotted spoon to a baking sheet and sprinkle with coarse salt. When the baking sheet is full, bake for 15-17 minutes until golden brown. Remove and cool on wire racks.

For the honey mustard:

Combine all ingredients in a medium bowl and whisk thoroughly to combine. Enjoy immediately or store in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

If you're using whey instead of apple cider vinegar and kombucha, whisk all ingredients together and set aside at room temperature for 2-3 days before serving.

SPICED SESAME SEED CANDY

In our house, we affectionately call this candy "Concoction." It's reminiscent of a Bumble Bar or the traditional Greek pasteli holiday confections. Sesame seeds are a surprisingly good source of calcium and other minerals and they're great for keeping you "regular." This can also be a fun project to do with older children—the candy sets quickly as it cools, so it's helpful to have lots of hands on-board to shape the treats.

Seed mixture:

2 1/2 cups sesame seeds
1/2 cup other seeds and/or nuts (flax, hemp, almonds, sunflower seeds, etc)
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground cardamom

Syrup mixture:

3/4 cup brown rice syrup
1/4 cup honey or unrefined cane sugar
1/2 teaspoon unrefined sea salt
1 teaspoon vanilla

If you don't have brown rice syrup on hand, you may use honey in its place, but I find the final result too sweet for my palate.

Makes approximately 50-75 candies

First, toast the sesame seeds by preheating a large sauté pan over medium heat, then adding the sesame seeds and tossing them every 30 seconds or so until they are flecked brown but not burned. (Toasting the seeds isn't crucial, but the flavor is significantly improved by doing so.)

Place the sesame seeds in a large bowl and add all the other "seed mixture" ingredients. Stir well and set aside.

Grease a baking sheet liberally with olive oil and pour a few tablespoons into a bowl to dip your hands in as you shape the candy later. Set aside.

Place brown rice syrup, honey, and sea salt in a large heavy-bottomed sauce pan with a candy thermometer.* Heat over medium heat to 248 degrees Fahrenheit. Quickly stir in vanilla.

Remove from the heat and immediately stir in the seed mixture. Stir until all seeds are coated. Quickly spread the mixture to a thickness of 1/2-inch on the prepared baking sheet and score into 1-inch squares with a large knife or the side of a spatula. Let cool just until it's cool enough to handle.

Rub your hands with olive oil and shape each square as you like: small logs, balls, thin sticks, or just broken into squares. You'll have to work quickly, as the candy sets as it cools.

**If you don't have a candy thermometer, you can "eyeball" the right temperature. The syrup mixture should be at firm-ball stage: just slightly stiff and quite thick—think of a slow-to-pour caramel topping for an ice cream sundae.*

SALTED DARK CHOCOLATE WAFERS

These cookies are like any good dark chocolate - sensuous, full-flavored, and just slightly bitter. They're also quite crunchy. Typically I like a soft cookie, but these I adapted in order to use for ice cream sandwiches. They're delicious alone or crumbled on top of ice cream too! And as always, choose fair trade and organic when it comes to anything chocolate.

1 1/4 cups sprouted whole wheat flour
1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder*
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon unrefined fine sea salt
1 cup unrefined cane sugar or sucanat
10 tablespoons (1 1/4 sticks) unsalted butter or coconut oil, softened
1 large egg

2 tablespoons coarse grey sea salt

**If you want somewhat flat cookies, which can be handy with ice cream sandwiches, use Dutch process cocoa, as it won't react with the baking soda to create a rise. If, however, you'd like a slightly puffier cookie, use regular unsweetened cocoa powder.*

Makes approximately 50 cookies

Preheat oven to 375°F. Lightly grease a baking sheet or line it with parchment paper or a silicone liner.

In a medium bowl, stir the flour, cocoa powder, baking soda, baking powder, and fine sea salt together with a whisk. Set aside.

In the bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter and the sugar together until fluffy. Reduce the speed to medium-low and add in the egg.

Reduce the speed again to low and add the dry ingredients in a spoonful at a time. Stir until the dough is completely mixed.

Drop rounded teaspoons of dough onto the prepared baking sheet approximately two inches apart. With moistened hands, slightly flatten each mound. Sprinkle lightly with coarse sea salt. Bake for 8-9 minutes, rotating once for even baking.

Let the cookies cool on the baking sheet for a few minutes before removing them to a cooling rack.