

## **BRAISED VEGETABLE MEDLEY**

¼ cup dry white table wine  
2 tablespoons each lemon juice and balsamic or red wine vinegar  
2 garlic cloves  
¼ teaspoon each mustard seed and fennel seed  
1 teaspoon chopped fresh parsley  
1 cup each sliced carrots and zucchini (1-inch thick pieces), and quartered mushrooms  
½ cup frozen pearl onions

In 10-inch nonstick skillet combine ¼ cup water, the wine, lemon juice, vinegar, garlic, mustard seed, fennel seed, and parsley; cover and cook over high heat until mixture comes to a boil. Boil for 2 minutes, until flavors blend.

Set sieve over small mixing bowl and pour wine mixture through sieve, reserving liquid and discarding solids; return wine mixture to skillet.

Bring wine mixture to a boil; add carrots. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover and cook until tender crisp, 5 to 7 minutes. Add remaining ingredients, cover, and cook until vegetables are fork-tender, about 5 minutes. Serves 2-3

## **BAKED CAULIFLOWER CASSEROLE**

4 Cups Cauliflower florets, blanched  
½ Cup Tomato sauce  
1½ Ounces Mozzarella cheese, shredded  
2 Tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese  
Italian Seasoning

Preheat oven to 375-degrees. Spray a 9 inch glass pie plate with nonstick cooking spray. Arrange cauliflower in the pie plate and spoon tomato sauce over the cauliflower

In a small mixing bowl, combine the Mozzarella cheese and the Parmesan cheese and the Italian seasoning, mix well then sprinkle them over the tomato sauce. Bake until cauliflower is thoroughly heated through, about 15 minutes. Serves 2-3

## **Baked Stuffed Potatoes with Goat Cheese and Rosemary**

2 medium russet potatoes, scrubbed, dried and pierced  
Coarse Salt and freshly ground Black Pepper

Olive oil  
¼ cup warm milk  
2 tablespoons butter  
¼ cup crumbled goat cheese  
¼ teaspoon ground rosemary  
Non-stick cooking spray, butter flavored if you have it

Rub the potatoes with olive oil and then make sure you have pierced them so the steam can escape. Place them on a foil lined baking sheet and sprinkle them with the coarse salt and freshly ground black pepper. Bake the potatoes in a 450-degree oven for hour or until they are completely soft inside when pierced with a knife or skewer. Remove from the oven and allow them to cool so you can handle them.

Slice the potatoes in half, then scoop out the inside leaving a shell. Spray these shells and return to a 350-degree oven to crisp up. Meanwhile, mash the potato filling and mix with warm milk, butter, goat cheese and rosemary. Mix this well to incorporate all the flavors. If the mixture is too stiff, add a little more milk. Once the skins are crisp, remove them from the oven and stuff them either using a small spoon or a piping bag. Drizzle each stuffed potato with a little olive oil and a pinch of salt and bake for 15 to 20 minutes or until browned and heated through. Serves 4

## **BLACK BEAN LASAGNE**

2 16 oz. cans black beans, rinsed & drained  
1 Cup salsa  
1 24 or 28-ounce jar meatless spaghetti sauce  
1 teaspoon garlic, minced  
1½ teaspoons ground cumin  
1 30oz. container ricotta cheese  
1/3 cup parmesan cheese, shredded  
1 egg white  
¼ cup milk – **see note**  
Package no-cook lasagna noodles – I use Barilla no cook, they just fit the 8x8 pans  
1 cup mozzarella cheese, shredded  
1 cup Monterey jack cheese, shredded  
2 8x8 aluminum pans  
Heavy duty foil  
Spray olive oil

Preheat oven to 350-degrees. Lightly grease (spray) 13 x 9 or two 8x8 baking pans – I use veggie spray.

In large bowl, stir together beans, salsa, spaghetti sauce, garlic, and cumin. Set aside

In medium bowl, stir together ricotta, Parmesan, egg white, and milk (note – depending on cheese and ricotta consistency, you may not need the entire ¼ cup of milk.).

Spread 1-2 tablespoons bean mixture in bottom of each 8 x 8 pan. Place 2 lasagna noodles over sauce. Spread with about one fourth the ricotta mixture and sprinkle with about one fourth the Monterey jack and mozzarella cheeses (remember, you are making two pans of lasagna). Now cover with 2 – 3 tablespoons bean mixture, making sure it covers the noodles completely. Repeat layer of noodles, ricotta mixture, bean mixture, mozzarella and Monterey jack cheese. Top with another layer of noodles and then sauce, then spread cheese over sauce.

Cover dish tightly with foil and bake for 30 - 40 minutes. Uncover and bake 10 minutes more or until noodles are done and lasagna is heated through. Set to stand 5 minutes before serving.

**Note: Prepare as above only do not cook. Cover and freeze. Defrost overnight in the refrigerator. Bake covered, 30 - 40 minutes in a preheated 350-degree oven. Uncover and bake an additional 10 minutes to ensure the lasagna is heated through. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.**

## **Brown Rice Salad with Fruit**

Serves 4-6

2/3 cup brown rice

1 small red bell pepper, seeded and diced

1 7-oz can corn Nib-lets drained

3 tbsp. golden raisins

One 8-oz. canned pineapple pieces in juice

1 tbsp. light soy sauce

1 tsp. sunflower oil

2 tsp. hazelnut oil – optional (can use good olive oil)

1 garlic clove, crushed

1 tsp. minced fresh ginger

Ground black pepper

4 scallions, sliced to garnish.

1. Cook the brown rice in a large saucepan of lightly salted boiling water for about 30 minutes, or until it is tender. Drain thoroughly and cool. Meanwhile, prepare the garnish by slicing the scallions at an angle and setting aside.
2. Transfer the rice to a bowl and add the red pepper, corn and raisins. Drain the pineapple pieces, reserving the juice, add them to the rice mixture and toss lightly.

3. Pour the reserved pineapple juice into a clean screw-top jar. Add the soy sauce, sunflower and hazelnut oils, garlic and ginger. Add some salt and pepper and then close the jar tightly and shake well to combine. Pour the dressing over the salad and toss well. Sprinkle the scallions over the top. Enjoy!

## **CARROT SOUP WITH CARAWAY-BREAD CRUMB TOPPING**

Serves 6-8

For the carrot puree:

¼ cup unsalted butter  
2 yellow onions, thinly sliced  
2 pounds carrots, thinly sliced  
1 fresh tarragon sprig or 1 tsp. dried tarragon  
4 cups vegetable stock  
1/3 cup fresh orange juice  
2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice  
Salt and ground white pepper

For the topping:

¼ cup unsalted butter  
2 tsp. caraway seeds  
2/3 cup fresh white bread crumbs  
2 tbsp. finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

For the carrot puree, in a large saucepan over medium heat, melt the butter. Add the onions and sauté until translucent, 2-3 minutes. Add the carrots and tarragon. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and cook, stirring occasionally, about 10 minutes. Add the stock and the orange and lemon juices. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer until the carrots are very tender, 10-15 minutes.

Discard the tarragon sprig, if using. In small batches, puree the soup in a food mill, a food processor, or a blender. Return the puree to the pan, season to taste with salt and white pepper, and rewarm gently over low heat.

For the topping, in a frying pan over medium-low heat, melt the butter. Add the caraway seeds and sauté for about 1 minute. Add the bread crumbs, raise the heat slightly, and sauté, stirring until golden brown, 2-3 minutes. Ladle the soup into warmed bowls and scatter the bread crumb mixture generously on top. Garnish with parsley

## **CHILLED CUCUMBER SOUP with RADISH CONFETTI**

2 lbs. cucumbers, peeled, halved, and seeded  
½ cup chopped yellow onion  
1 cup low-fat buttermilk  
½ cup fat-free plain yogurt  
Salt and ground pepper to taste  
¼ cup finely chopped green (spring) onions  
½ cup diced radish

Finely dice enough cucumber to measure 1/3 cup; set aside. Chop the remaining cucumber and place in the blender or food processor with the onion, buttermilk, and yogurt. Process the soup until smooth then season with salt and pepper. Cover and refrigerate until cold, about 30 minutes.

To serve, divide the soup among chilled bowls and garnish with the reserved cucumber, the radish, and the green onion. Serve at once.

## **CHUNKY VEGETABLE STEW**

3 tablespoons olive oil  
2 each onions, large, sliced thick  
4 cloves garlic crushed  
2 14oz. cans diced tomatoes, undrained  
10 oz. sweet potatoes, peeled and diced (about 2 large potatoes)  
2 14 oz. can chick peas, drained  
1 teaspoon dried rosemary, crushed  
2 small zucchini, diced  
Salt and pepper to taste  
½ cup parmesan cheese, grated as garnish

Heat olive oil in heavy large saucepan or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add onions and cook for 10 minutes, then add garlic and cook 1 minute longer. Add tomatoes, chickpeas, diced sweet potatoes and rosemary and simmer for 10 to 14 minutes, or until the potatoes are cooked. Cut zucchini in half lengthwise, then into quarters, then dice into ¼ inch slices; add to cooking vegetables. Continue cooking, uncovered, stirring occasionally until the zucchini is tender about 6 to 8 minutes. Serve in large bowls and garnish with fresh grated Parmesan cheese.

Note: you can cool the stew down and freeze. Defrost overnight in the refrigerator and reheat in a saucepan over medium heat to a low simmer, about 10 minutes. Serve and garnish with

fresh cheese. This is a great dish for leftover turkey, especially the dark meat. Just add the meat when you add the zucchini. Serves 6 - 8

## **GARDEN VEGETABLE GAZPACHO**

3 medium tomatoes, peeled and chopped\* (2½ cups) OR 1- 28oz can chopped tomatoes with juice  
1 each, small yellow and green pepper, seeded and diced  
2 green onions, thinly sliced  
1 peeled carrot, grated  
1 tablespoon snipped fresh basil or 1 teaspoon dried basil, crushed  
1 clove garlic, minced  
1 5½ oz. can reduced-sodium tomato juice  
1 tablespoon lemon juice - fresh  
1/8 teaspoon salt  
Dash freshly ground black pepper  
Several dashed bottled hot pepper sauce  
Fresh basil leaves, garnish, optional

Combine tomatoes, sweet peppers, green onion, basil, and garlic in a large mixing bowl. Stir in tomato juice, lemon juice, salt, pepper and hot pepper sauce. Cover then chill in the refrigerator for 2 to 24 hours. To serve, ladle soup into chilled soup bowls or mugs. Garnish with fresh basil, if desired.

\*Use fresh tomatoes when they are in season, otherwise use chopped can tomatoes

## **GREEK ORZO STUFFED PEPPERS**

4 yellow, orange, and/or red bell peppers or one of each  
½ cups whole-wheat orzo if you can find it, otherwise just plain orzo  
1 15 oz. can chickpeas, rinsed  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 medium onion, chopped  
6 oz. fresh baby spinach, washed, rinsed and chopped  
1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano or 1 teaspoon dried  
¾ cup crumbled feta cheese – divided  
¼ cup sun-dried tomatoes (not oil packed) chopped  
1 tablespoon sherry vinegar or red-wine vinegar  
¼ teaspoon salt

Half peppers lengthwise through the stems, leaving the stems attached. Remove the seeds and white membrane. Place the peppers cut-side down in a large microwave-safe dish. Add ½ inch water, cover, and microwave on high until peppers are just softened, 5 to 7 minutes. Let cool slightly, drain, and set aside.

Meanwhile, bring a large saucepan of water to a boil. Add the orzo and cook until just tender, about 8 to 10 minutes or according to package directions. Drain and rinse with cold water. Place in a large bowl.

Mash chickpeas into a chunky paste with a fork, leaving some peas whole.

Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat; add onion and cook stirring, until soft, about 4 minutes. Add spinach and oregano and cook, stirring until the spinach is wilted, about 1 minute. Stir in the orzo, chickpeas, ½ cup feta, tomatoes, vinegar, and salt; cook until heated through, about 1 more minutes. Divide the filling among the pepper halves and sprinkle each pepper with some of the remaining ¼ cup feta. Plate and serve with a nice green salad, glass of wine and maybe some rustic bread.

## **HERBED BROCCOLI BISQUE**

Leeks contribute a subtle, pleasing flavor to this easy soup, which gets its creamy texture from pureed potatoes and broccoli. We prefer to use a blender, but you may puree the soup in a food processor. In that case, the texture of the soup will not be quite as smooth.

3 medium leeks  
1 garlic clove, minced  
2 teaspoons non-diet tub-style canola or corn-oil margarine or butter  
3 cups defatted chicken broth, divided  
4 cups small broccoli florets  
1 pound boiling potatoes (about 4 medium), peeled and cut into ¾" cubes  
1 teaspoon dried basil leaves  
1 teaspoon dried thyme leaves  
¼ teaspoon ground white pepper  
1½ cups 2% fat milk  
1 teaspoon lemon juice  
½ teaspoon salt, or to taste  
Tiny blanched broccoli florets or fresh broccoli leaves for garnish

Clean the leeks by trimming off the root ends and all but about 1" of the green tops; discard. Peel off and discard 1 to 2 layers of tough outer leaves. Then, beginning at the green end, slice down about 1" into the leeks. Put the leeks in a colander. Wash them thoroughly under cool

running water. Wash again to remove all traces of dirt. Set them aside until well drained. Cut into ½" pieces.

In a Dutch oven or other large heavy pot, combine the leeks, garlic, margarine or butter and 3 tablespoons of the broth. Cook over medium heat, stirring frequently, for 10 minutes, or until the leeks are tender but not browned. (Add a bit more broth if the liquid begins to evaporate.) Add the 4 cups broccoli florets, potatoes, basil, thyme, pepper and the remaining broth. Bring to a boil. Cover, reduce the heat and simmer for 11 to 14 minutes, or until the potatoes and broccoli are fork tender. Remove from the heat and let cool slightly.

Working in batches, puree the mixture using a hand held blender stick, moving the stick around the pot until the mixture is completely smooth. Add the milk, lemon juice and salt. Mix well. Cook for an additional 4 to 5 minutes; **do not boil**. Garnish individual servings with the blanched florets or leaves

Makes 5 servings

## ITALIAN VEGETABLE PIE

2 teaspoons olive oil  
1 cup chopped green bell pepper  
1 cup chopped onion  
1 cup chopped mushrooms –about 3 ounces – white or varied  
3 garlic cloves, minced  
3 tablespoons tomato paste  
1 teaspoon dried Italian seasoning  
1 teaspoon fennel seeds  
¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes  
1 (12.3 oz.) package firm tofu, drained and crumbled  
1 (25.5 oz.) bottle fat-free marinara sauce  
Cooked lasagna noodles cut in half crosswise – about 12  
1 ½ cups (6 oz.) shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese  
¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese  
Cooking Spray  
Large glass pie plate

Preheat oven to 375-degrees. Cook pasta noodles in boiling water until al dente, remove, drain and place on parchment lined baking sheet so they don't stick together.

Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat; add bell pepper, onion, mushrooms, and garlic – sauté 3 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Stir in tomato paste and next 5 ingredients; bring mixture to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, 10 minutes.



Arrange lasagna noodles spoke-like in the bottom and up the sides of a 9-inch deep-dish pie plate coated with cooking spray. Make sure the bottom of the pie plate is completely covered with the noodles. Cut and fit if needed. Spread 3 cups of the cooked mixture over the noodles. Fold the ends of the noodles over the tofu mixture; top with remaining tofu mixture, covering ends of noodles. Sprinkle with cheese. Bake in preheated oven for 20 minutes; let stand 5 minutes prior to slicing and serving. Serve with a nice fresh green salad, glass of wine and maybe some rustic bread.

## **PEARS WITH HONEY AND YOGURT**

2 pears, sliced into slices from top to bottom, about 6-8 slices per pear  
2 oz. melted butter, preferably clarified  
1/3 Cup demerara (raw) sugar  
1 cup thick plain yogurt  
¼ cup honey, flavored if you can get it, like clover honey or wildflower honey

Brush pears with the melted butter and sprinkle with the sugar. Place pear slices on a hot preheated flat grill or fry pan and cook for 1 minute on each side or until they are golden in color.

To serve, stack half the slices from each pear on a plate. Top slices with a spoonful of yogurt and drizzle with the honey. Serves 4

## **RICE AND VEGETABLE CASSEROLE**

1¼ Cups dry brown rice, medium grain  
2¼ cups water  
3 Tablespoons butter  
2 teaspoons salt  
½ cup carrots, diced and blanched  
¼ pound mushrooms, diced  
¼ cup red bell peppers, diced  
½ cup broccoli, blanched  
½ cup zucchini, diced  
1/3 cup corn, canned  
1/3 cup peas, frozen, thawed  
½ cup onions, diced  
¼ teaspoon marjoram

½ teaspoon thyme, dried  
¼ teaspoon white pepper  
6 ounces Cheddar cheese, grated  
2 Tablespoons olive oil  
2 Tablespoons flour  
1½ cups milk, heated  
1 egg, large

Cook rice in 2¼ cups of water to which you have added 1 tablespoon of butter and t tsp. of salt, until done, approximately 30 minutes.

Heat 1 Tablespoon of butter in a large skillet over medium heat and add all of the vegetables. Sauté until tender, about 5 minutes; mix vegetables with cooked rice, spices, and cheese. Use the remaining tablespoon of butter to grease two large aluminum loaf pans.

In a large skillet, cook the olive oil and flour over medium heat for 2 minutes. Whisk in the hot milk slowly and continue to cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally until thickened and bubbly. Let cool. Add one beaten egg and combine thoroughly. Add this to the vegetable-rice mixture and pour into buttered aluminum tins. Bake in preheated 350-degree oven for 30 minutes. Let cool slightly, and then serve.

Note: You can allow this to cool, then take one tin and cover with heavy duty foil and freeze. To reheat, defrost in the refrigerator the night before day of consumption; then heat, covered, in a 350-degree oven approximately 30 to 40 minutes, until heated throughout.

## **RICE PATTIES, NEW ORLEANS STYLE**

2 cups brown rice, cooked (can use bagged instant Brown Rice)  
2 each eggs, beaten  
5 each green onions, sliced thin – white and ½ green stems  
¼ cup walnuts, chopped fine  
¼ cup breadcrumbs dry  
½ teaspoon thyme, dried  
½ teaspoon basil, dried  
¼ teaspoon salt, divided  
¼ teaspoon red pepper, ground  
½ cup green bell peppers, diced, but not too small a dice  
1 15oz. can kidney beans, rinsed & drained  
1 8oz. can tomato sauce  
½ cup water  
3 teaspoons chili powder

½ cup shredded cheddar cheese

Spray a large baking sheet with a non-stick cooking spray. In a medium bowl, combine the rice, eggs, green onions, walnuts, breadcrumbs, thyme, basil, salt (1/8 tsp.), and the red pepper. Mix well, and then with wet hands, shape the mixture into 8 or 9 patties and place them on the baking sheet. Bake at 400 degrees for 8 –12 minutes. Remove from oven and cool in pan. Note: the patties will firm up as they cool.

Meanwhile, in a saucepan over medium heat, sauté the green bell pepper in ½ tsp of oil until tender. Stir in the kidney beans, tomato sauce, water, chili powder, and remaining 1/8 tsp of salt. Bring this mixture to a boil and reduce heat. Simmer uncovered for about 10 minutes. Mash some of the beans with either a potato masher or a fork. Remove the sauce from the heat.

You can make all this a day ahead and just keep it in the refrigerator. To serve, just reheat the patties in the microwave in a single layer until hot. Reheat the sauce on top of the stove to a low simmer and spoon over the patties. Top with the cheddar cheese.

Note: you can freeze the patties and sauce in separate containers. If you freeze the patties, layer them with wax paper between the patties. Thaw them in the refrigerator the day prior to day of consumption. Reheat as above. Serves 3-4

## **ROASTED RED BELL PEPPER AND MOZZARELLA SANDWICHES WITH BASIL PUREE**

1 Jar roasted Red Bell Peppers – Note: You can roast your own, if desired  
4 soft rolls  
1 –2 good size balls of fresh mozzarella. If you can't find, you can use packaged sliced  
2 cups packed fresh basil  
1/3 cup olive oil  
½ tsp salt

Blend the basil, olive oil and salt in a food processor or blender. Strain into a small bowl.

Spread some of the basil mixture on ½ of the rolls; top with some roasted red pepper, some sliced mozzarella, then more basil sauce and the top of the roll. Press and slice in half, placing a toothpick in each half to hold the sandwich together. Serve with chips. Serves 4

## **ROASTED WINTER VEGETABLES**

1 large rutabaga, peeled and cut into  $\frac{3}{4}$ " chunks  
1/3 cup low-fat chicken broth  
3 medium carrots, peeled and cut into  $\frac{3}{4}$ " lengths  
12 small ( $1\frac{1}{2}$ " diameter) white onions, peeled and halved  
3 large all-purpose potatoes cut into  $1\frac{1}{4}$ " chunks  
 $1\frac{1}{2}$  Tablespoons olive oil, preferably extra-virgin  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon dried thyme leaves  
 $\frac{1}{8}$  teaspoon ground black pepper  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon salt

Preheat the oven to 375 –degrees.

Combine the rutabagas and broth in a large roasting pan or jelly-roll pan. Place on the center oven rack and roast, stirring occasionally, for 20 minutes.

In a large bowl, stir together the carrots, onions, potatoes, oil, thyme and pepper until well combined. Add the rutabagas and any remaining broth. Transfer the vegetables to the pan previously used for the rutabagas. Spread the vegetables out evenly.

Roast, stirring occasionally, for 40 to 50 minutes, or until the carrots and rutabagas are just tender when pierced with a fork. Sprinkle with the salt and mix well. Makes 5 servings

## **SPRING SKILLET FRITTATA**

2 tablespoons olive or vegetable oil  
6 small red potatoes, each cut into 8 pieces  
2 cups cut up asparagus  
2 tablespoons sliced green onions  
1 garlic clove, minced  
6 eggs  
 $\frac{1}{3}$  cup milk  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt  
 $\frac{1}{8}$  teaspoon pepper  
2 ounces ( $\frac{1}{2}$  cup) crumbled feta cheese  
1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil

Heat the oil in large nonstick skillet over medium heat until hot. Add potatoes; cover and cook 10 to 12 minutes or until almost tender, stirring occasionally. Add asparagus, onions and garlic; cook 4 to 5 minutes or until asparagus is almost tender, stirring occasionally

Meanwhile, beat eggs in medium bowl, add milk, salt and pepper and mix well. **Pour egg mixture over vegetables in skillet. Sprinkle with cheese and basil. Reduce heat to medium-low; cover and cook 12 to 14 minutes or until eggs are set. To serve, cut into wedges.**

## **TOMATO - VEGETABLE LAYERED CASSEROLE**

1 medium potato, peeled and sliced into ½ inch pieces  
1 medium yam (sweet potato) peeled and cut into ½ inch pieces  
1 red pepper, seeded and cut into ½ inch pieces  
2 carrots, peeled and cut into ½ inch pieces  
5 tablespoons olive oil  
1 red onion, thinly sliced into rings  
2 small or 1 large Zucchini, cut crosswise into ¼ inch thick pieces  
Salt and Pepper  
2 large ripe tomatoes cut crosswise into ¼ inch thick slices  
½ cup grated Parmesan cheese  
2 tablespoon dried Italian style bread crumbs  
Fresh basil springs, for garnish

Preheat oven to 400-degrees.

Toss the potato, yam, bell pepper, carrots, and 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a 13 x 9 x 2 inch baking dish to coat. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and toss until coated. Spread vegetables evenly over the bottom of the pan.

Arrange the onion slices evenly over the vegetables mixture. Arrange the zucchini over the onion; drizzle with 2 tablespoons of oil; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Arrange the tomato slices over the zucchini.

Stir the Parmesan and bread crumbs in a small bowl to blend. Sprinkle the Parmesan bread crumbs over the vegetable in the baking dish. Drizzle with the last tablespoon of olive oil. Bake the casserole, uncovered, until the vegetables are tender and the topping is golden brown, about 40 minutes. Garnish with fresh basil springs, if desired. Serves 4 to 6

## **TUSCAN BEAN AND CABBAGE SOUP**

2 tablespoons olive oil  
¾ cup onions, chopped  
2/3 cup celery, diced

½ cup carrots, sliced  
2 cloves garlic, small, minced  
1 28oz. can tomatoes, Italian plum, canned  
3 cups chicken broth or vegetable broth  
3 cups Savoy cabbage, chopped  
1/3 cup red bell peppers, diced  
1/3 cup zucchini, diced  
½ teaspoon thyme, dried  
2 15oz. can Cannellini Beans, drained

Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add the onion, celery, carrot, and garlic, and cook, stirring occasionally until tender, about 5 minutes.

Drain and chop the tomatoes, reserving the juice. Add both to the vegetables, along with the chicken and/or vegetable broth, cabbage, red pepper, zucchini, and thyme. Then cook partially covered until vegetables are tender and the flavors have blended, about 20 minutes. Add drained beans during last 5 minutes of cooking time.

Note: You can at serving time, drizzle a little extra virgin olive oil on top of soup and sprinkle with a little either fresh thyme or some finely chopped parsley.

## **TUSCAN BREAD-AND-TOMATO SALAD-(panzanella)**

1 pound stale (firm but not dried-out) country-style bread, about four 1-inches thick slices  
4 large very ripe and flavorful tomatoes  
1 large red onion, finely sliced  
1 or 2 cucumbers, peeled, quartered lengthwise and chunked. (Can seed, if wanted)  
1 cup firmly packed fresh basil, very coarsely chopped or torn  
½ cup extra virgin olive oil  
3 tablespoons aged red wine vinegar  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Soften the bread slices in a bowl of cool water; then squeeze each slice gently to rid it of excess liquid. Tear the bread into chunks, discarding the thick crusts, and drop the chunks into a salad bowl. Slice the tomatoes thickly or cut in chunks and add to the bowl. Add the onion, cucumber, and torn or chopped basil.

In a separate small bowl, beat the oil and vinegar with a fork to emulsify, adding salt and pepper to taste as you beat. Pour the dressing over the salad and mix well, using your hands. Set aside in a cool spot to let the flavors develop (but do not refrigerate) for at least 30 minutes before serving. Serves 4

## **VEGETARIAN CHILI**

42 ounces tomatoes - diced, canned  
2 15 oz. Cans Red Kidney beans – one drained, one un-drained  
3 Tablespoon olive oil  
1 Yellow onion, chopped  
2 Cloves garlic, minced  
3 Tablespoons chili powder  
½ Teaspoon basil, dried  
½ Teaspoon cumin  
1/2 Teaspoon oregano, dried  
1 Zucchini, diced  
1 Yellow squash, diced  
2 Cups carrots, peeled and diced, about 3-4 carrots  
Salt and pepper to taste

Drain one of the cans of kidney beans. In a large pot, heat olive oil and sauté onion over medium heat until onion starts to sweat, about 2 minutes. Now add the garlic and cook until the onions are soft, but not brown. Mix together – (this should be done prior to your starting the cooking) - the spices (chili powder, dried basil, dried oregano, ground cumin) and add all at once to the onions. Cook, stirring 30 seconds and then add zucchini, yellow squash, and carrots until well blended. (Note: the vegetables should be diced prior to starting cooking and should be uniform size, not too small but not too big, about a ½ inch dice). Cook for 1 minute over low heat, stirring.

Stir in tomatoes, with liquid, and drained and un-drained kidney beans. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, partially covered, for 30 to 45 minutes, stirring several times, until thickened. Remove cover last 15 minutes if needed to encourage thickening. Season with salt and pepper and serve. Note: This can be served over white rice, brown rice or pasta. Serves 6 - 8

## **VEGETARIAN ENCHILADAS**

1 tablespoon butter  
½ onion, diced  
¼ pound mushrooms, sliced  
1 zucchini, diced  
¼ green bell pepper, diced  
½ cup canned corn, drained  
½ cup peeled diced sweet potatoes  
½ teaspoon cumin  
1/8 teaspoon oregano, dried  
1/8 teaspoon garlic powder

½ cup tortilla chips, crushed  
3 tablespoons cilantro, minced  
5 ounces cheese, grated  
8 Corn or flour tortillas  
3 cups Mexican tomato sauce (recipe below) **note: must be made prior to other things**  
Salt and pepper  
Sour cream

Heat butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add onions and cook about 8 minutes, stirring occasionally, just until onions are beginning to brown. Add remaining vegetables and cumin, oregano, and garlic powder, and continue to cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are crisp-tender. Remove from heat, let cool, then add the crushed chips, 2 tablespoons of the cilantro, and the cheese, reserving some of the cheese for the top of the enchiladas. Season this mixture to taste with salt and pepper.

Spread one side of each tortilla with warm Mexican tomato sauce and place tomato sauce side up, then fill with approximately ¼ cup of the filling and roll up. Place two filled tortillas in aluminum tin and then spoon about ½ cup of the tomato sauce over each pair of enchiladas. Top with remaining cheese and cilantro; cover with heavy-duty foil and bake in a 350-degree preheated oven approximately 30 minutes or until heated throughout. Serve with a dollop of sour cream. Serves 4

## **MEXICAN TOMATO SAUCE**

2 16 oz. cans tomatoes  
2 tablespoons oil  
1 cup onions, chopped fine  
1 Jalapeno pepper, small, minced  
3 cloves garlic, minced  
2 tablespoons red wine  
1 teaspoon oregano, dried  
1 teaspoon chili powder  
½ teaspoon cumin  
½ teaspoon basil, dried

Heat the oil in a medium-size saucepan over medium-low heat. Add the onion, jalapeno, and garlic, and cook until the onion is translucent, about 5 minutes. Add chopped tomatoes with juice, wine, dried oregano, chili powder, cumin, and dried basil; simmer, uncovered for 20 to 30 minutes or until sauce is thickened, stirring occasionally. Puree in food processor or blender.



## WEST AFRICAN SWEET POTATO STEW

1 tablespoon vegetable oil  
1 onion, medium, peeled, sliced and separated into rings  
¼ cup peanut butter, creamy  
1 teaspoon chili powder  
½ teaspoon ground ginger  
½ teaspoon salt  
¼ teaspoon ground red pepper  
3 large sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into ½ inch cubes  
2 14oz. cans diced tomatoes with roasted garlic, **undrained**  
1 15 oz. can Great Northern beans, **undrained** or black beans for color  
1 15 oz. can whole kernel corn, **drained**  
¾ cup brown rice, UNCOOKED

Heat oil in a 4-quart Dutch oven over medium-high heat; cook onion in oil, stirring frequently until tender.

Stir in remaining ingredients except rice. Heat to boiling, add rice and stir cooking for 1 to 2 minutes to ensure rice is coated with liquid then reduce heat to medium-low; cover, cook about 25 to 35 minutes, stirring occasionally, until potatoes are tender and rice is cooked.

Note: for West African Sweet Potato Chicken Stew add 2 skinless, boneless chicken breasts, cut into ¾ inch pieces, with the onion in step 1. Cook until no longer pink; then continue the recipe as directed.

## ZUCCHINI/DILL SOUP

2 tablespoons (¼ stick) butter  
5 zucchini (about 1 ¼ pounds) thinly sliced  
1 large onion, chopped  
2 garlic cloves, chopped  
1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill or 1 teaspoon dried  
4 cups canned low-salt chicken broth or vegetable broth (I like the vegetable broth over chicken. Trader Joe's boxed stocks, which I find are low in salt, are great in this recipe.)

Melt butter in large pot over medium-high heat. Add next four ingredients. Sauté until tender, about 10 minutes; then add broth and bring soup to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer soup for 10–15 minutes. Working in batches, either puree soup in blender or using a hand-held stick blender, puree soup in pot. If you used a blender, return soup to pot, season with salt and

pepper. (Soup can be made 1 –2 days in advance. Cover and chill.) Bring soup to simmer. Ladle into bowls. Top with sour cream and springs of fresh dill, if desired. Serves six

## **Zucchini Chimichangas**

3 tablespoons oil  
5 each zucchini, diced  
1 4oz. can green chopped chilies  
1 medium size onion, yellow, diced  
2 teaspoons oregano, dried  
1½ teaspoons cumin  
2 cups (dry measure cups) tortilla chips, crushed  
¼ cup cilantro, minced  
2 cups Jack cheese, grated  
8 large flour tortillas  
8 ounces salsa  
8 oz. container sour cream  
Salt, to taste  
Oil for brushing onto tortillas or spray oil/butter

Heat the 3 tablespoons oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat; add diced zucchini, chilies, onion, oregano, and cumin. Sauté just until vegetables are tender, about 10 minutes, stirring every so often. Remove from heat and let cool slightly. Stir in crushed tortilla chips, cilantro, and cheese; season to taste with salt.

Heat the tortillas either in the microwave for 15-20 seconds each or in a warm oven in order to soften them so they roll up better.

Divide the zucchini mixture between the tortillas, fold in the ends of the tortillas, and then roll up “burrito style”. Do this one tortilla at a time so they stay soft and pliable.

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Brush the baking sheet with a little oil and lay the filled tortillas, seam-side down on baking sheet. Brush the tops with oil or spray and bake in the preheated oven 18 to 22 minutes or till golden brown and crisp. Remove from the oven and allow the Chimichangas to cool a few minutes and serve with sour cream and salsa.

Note: Cooked Chimichangas can be cooled and wrapped in heavy-duty foil and frozen. Just defrost overnight and cook in preheated 375-degree oven for 8-10 minutes just to heat through.