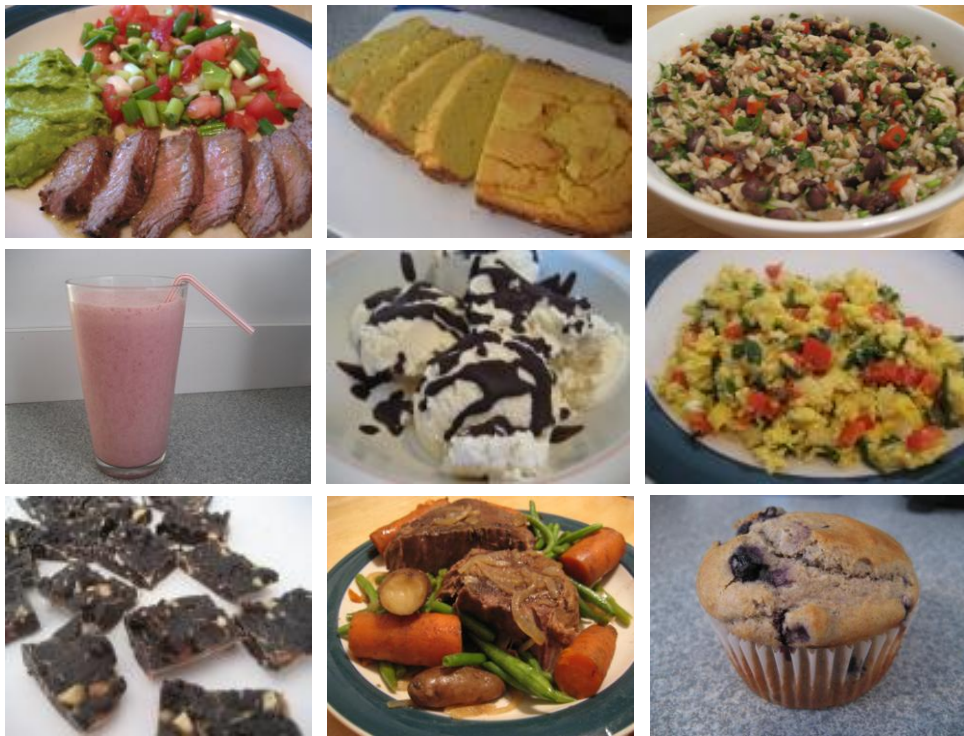


Eating Additive-Free!



Natural Cookbook & Grocery Shopping Guide

Includes 160 simple, delicious recipes!

Why I Created this Book...

In 2007, I made the startling discovery that food additives were destroying my health.

I had almost given up hope after suffering for years with extreme fatigue, widespread pain, muscle weakness, digestive distress, sleep disturbances, and numerous other symptoms. Daily tasks were unbearable. I was frequently bedridden, and I could no longer fulfill my duties at work. On good days, I felt 90 years old. On bad days, I felt like I should be in the hospital.

After countless doctors' appointments, I was diagnosed with **Fibromyalgia** and told I would suffer with pain and fatigue for the rest of my life...



Christy Pooschke (author)

Luckily, I found *other* answers on my own! I started reading the ingredient labels on *every* food I purchased, and I **stopped eating things that I couldn't clearly identify as having come from a plant or animal in nature**. Within just a few months of eliminating dangerous food additives from my diet (e.g., MSG, artificial sweeteners, and preservatives), all of my symptoms *completely* resolved! (You can read my entire return-to-health journey at CompletelyNourished.com.)

After experiencing such drastic improvements in my *own* health, I developed a **passion for helping others eat more naturally**. I created this book to share what I have learned through years of studying the food industry and experimenting in my kitchen. **I compiled all of this information for you** because I know how overwhelming it can feel to get started. My book equips you with the recipes and shopping tips you need to reduce the amount of food additives in your diet and begin enjoying natural foods!

It breaks my heart to think of how many others out there may be **suffering needlessly** just as I was. I've experienced, firsthand, the misery that can result from eating processed foods. And countless others have reported physiological reactions (e.g., headaches, digestive distress, seizures, heart attacks, etc.) to food additives such as [MSG](#) (p. 76), as well. When I started reading about food additives, **I was shocked to discover that MSG was in nearly everything I was eating and drinking** - not *just* in Chinese food! Like many other consumers, I had *no* clue that it was contributing to my poor health.

Along with information about various *other* food additives, I have included very detailed information about **MSG** in this book to alert you to why it's **dangerous**, where it's hiding (**in foods you'd never suspect**), and how **it can affect your health without you even realizing it!** It is my sincerest wish that your transition to an additive-free diet will be as rewarding as mine! Obviously, not everyone will experience the *same* results as I did. But when you start learning about all of the health problems associated with various food additives, avoiding them in your diet certainly seems worth a try!

Oh...and be sure to stay tuned to my website and blog at CompletelyNourished.com for even *more* resources and information, too! You can register to receive **FREE email updates from me**, so you don't miss any of my valuable tips and information in the future! Blessings to you on your journey!

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PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK

The purpose of this book is to equip you with the recipes and information you need to reduce your reliance on processed food. The 40-page shopping guide included here is intended to help you find the most additive-free versions of the ingredients and products required for the 160 recipes in this book. There are many recommendations for additional self-study included here, as well, for those who would like to research certain topics in more depth. With the exception of fruits and vegetables, shopping tips are included in this guide for *every* ingredient used in my recipes. My advice for selecting *fresh* fruits and vegetables is to give preference to *certified organic* (see below) or *local* varieties; and avoid [“genetically-modified organisms” \(GMOs\)](#) (p. 69) whenever possible. When selecting store-bought *canned* or *frozen* produce, also check the ingredients label and select brands that contain only vegetables or fruit and, possibly, sea salt.

This guide is not an *exhaustive* list of *every* food additive. If you see an ingredient on a food label that is not discussed in my guide *and* you don't *fully* understand what the word means, I recommend leaving that product on your grocer's shelf! As a general rule, if you cannot easily identify every ingredient on a label as having come directly from a plant or an animal in nature, then I do not recommend you purchase the product.

I adhere *strictly* to an additive-free diet 100% of the time because I experience acute physiological reactions to many food additives. The degree to which *you* implement this advice is up to you. I'm including all of the information you need to eat as “strictly” as I do. However, depending upon your lifestyle and the foods to which you have access, your choices may be more limited. Do the best you can, and implement this guidance to the degree that suits you best! Many families find it useful to adopt an “80/20 Rule.” They adhere to an additive-free diet 80% of the time, and they allow themselves flexibility with the other 20% of their diet for social events, special occasions, travelling, etc.

The guidelines here are not intended to represent the absolute healthiest diet possible. Rather, they will help you *reduce* the amount of health-depleting chemical additives in your diet. For example, some recipes in this book use white flour, and there are tips in the shopping guide to help you select the *most* additive-free white flour available at the grocery store. Is additive-free white flour a *health food*? Absolutely not. But if you are going to eat white flour products on occasion, you're much better off making homemade versions of those items (e.g., Alfredo sauce, sugar cookies) than ingesting the commercial, additive-filled packaged varieties you'd find at the store!

“CERTIFIED ORGANIC” & “FARM-FRESH” FOODS

According to the USDA, **certified organic** food is “produced by farmers who emphasize the use of renewable resources and the conservation of soil and water to enhance environmental quality for future generations. Organic meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy products come from animals that are given no antibiotics or growth hormones. Organic food is produced without using most conventional pesticides; fertilizers made with synthetic ingredients or sewage sludge; bioengineering; or ionizing radiation.” I am convinced that foods that are *truly* organically-raised in this fashion are the healthiest foods we can consume, but I suggest you do your *own* research and come to your *own* conclusion. Be sure to review the “genetically-modified organisms” ([GMOs](#)) information on page 69 of this book, as well, because purchasing “certified organic” food is one great way to avoid the potentially health-depleting side effects of [GMOs](#).

Do I buy *exclusively* organic foods? No, I do the best I can. Even if you buy absolutely *no* organically-raised food, you are still much better off preparing your own *non-organic* recipes from whole, real food ingredients than you would be purchasing processed foods. Also, just because an item is labeled “organic,” does not mean it is a *health food* - organic ice cream is *still* ice cream! And just because something is *organic* doesn't mean it is *additive-free*. Read ingredient labels on “organic” *processed* foods. You may be surprised by what you find. Unless a “certified organic” food is also labeled as “**100% organic**,” it's allowed to contain up to 5% *non-organic* ingredients. *Unprocessed* foods are always best, organic or not.

Even better than organic food is food that you grow yourself or purchase from a local farmer whom you've gotten to know personally and/or whose farm you've been able to visit. Many of these farms will likely *not* be “certified organic” (even though they use organic growing practices) because it is costly for

(Continued on next page...)

“CERTIFIED ORGANIC” & “FARM-FRESH” FOODS (*cont.*)

farmers to receive that designation for their food. So if you’re looking for “organic” food, be sure to ask the growers whether or not they use chemicals on their farm and use organic feed for the animals, etc. before you totally dismiss them as “*not organic.*”

What? You don’t know *any* farmers? Well, you need to locate farmers markets in your area and go meet a few! Many consumers are so incredibly detached from where their food comes from and how it is produced. I would bet that if most people took a look inside “factory farms” (where many animal products are produced), they would never eat those animal products again. If you want to eat animal products that come from places with green pastures, red barns and families who truly love their animals, spare them suffering and guarantee them a swift and humane death, then you absolutely must purchase from your local farmers! I realize it sounds complicated and overwhelming at first, but just take the first step and start chatting with producers at your local farmers market. If you aren’t familiar with how most commercial meats are farmed, I encourage you to research “factory farms” on the Internet - but make sure you’re prepared to see some very disturbing graphics and footage.

Ideally, we would all eat foods exclusively from our own backyards and local farmers. However, this shopping guide is designed to help you navigate the *grocery store* to make the best possible choices from the products available *there* because that is where you most likely purchase the *majority* of your food. Right? Again, this book is a *first* step. You can decide for yourself where you’ll go from here. I grow a huge garden and can/freeze some of it for the winter months. I also purchase most animal products (eggs, meat, etc.) directly from local farmers. But I do shop at the grocery store for plenty of items, as well, so I am fully aware of how overwhelming it becomes to navigate those aisles when you’re searching for additive-free foods. I created this cookbook and grocery guide to help make shopping a bit easier for you!

HOW TO USE THE SHOPPING GUIDE

Step 1: Read the entire shopping guide section (p. 53) from beginning to end at least once, so you become familiar with the guidelines. As you read, make notes of any items that you already use regularly but would like to replace with an “additive-free” version (e.g., “We need to replace our ketchup.”).

Step 2: Browse through the cookbook, and make a note of which recipes you’d like to try first.

Step 3: Compare the ingredients of those recipes to the information in the shopping guide to see which items you may already have on hand that meet the criteria listed here.

Step 4: Make a grocery list of any new items you’ll need for those recipes, and place a special mark by any items for which you’ll be purchasing a new additive-free brand for the *first* time – that way you’ll remember to refer to this guide before making your selection at the store.

Step 5: Take the shopping guide (and your shopping list) to the store with you. For your *first* grocery trip, shop at the store where you most often grocery shop; so you’ll learn which items you’ll be able to regularly purchase at the place that’s most convenient for you.

Step 6: Make notes of any items that your store doesn’t carry. You’ll need to ask if they can order the items for you. If not, then you’ll need to select from the following options: 1) check other stores 2) purchase the products online 3) adjust the recipes if possible 4) skip those recipes altogether 5) decide that you’re willing to live with a few additive-filled items in your diet for now, and simply purchase the most additive-free version of those items that you can find.

NOTE: The first few times you tackle the grocery store with this guide, it’s going to take quite a bit of extra time to read labels and determine which items are available at the stores in your area. I promise it gets easier and quicker as you become familiar with which items are okay at your particular stores. Eventually your shopping will take no longer than it did in the past. I recommend keeping a list of brand names of the additive-free items you purchase to use as a reference so you can save time on future trips. Be aware, however, that companies do sometimes change their formulas and ingredients. Memorizing brand names is a great short-cut, but it’s a good idea to *double-check* ingredients labels from time to time, as well.

NATURAL FOOD STORES & SPECIALTY ITEMS

The majority of the ingredients in this book can be purchased at a *regular* grocery store. This is especially true for the *whole* food ingredients (fruits, vegetables, eggs, etc.). However, there are many condiments and pre-packaged ingredients (e.g., Dijon mustard, balsamic vinegar) in my recipes for which you may not have local access to an additive-free version unless you live near a *natural* food store. Just do the best you can.

Many of these products are available for purchase online if you desire. Alternatively, you may decide it's not worth the trouble and elect one of the following options: skip that recipe altogether, omit that ingredient or make a substitution, or decide that you've cleaned up your diet enough to have a few exceptions in your life as a matter of convenience and/or cost effectiveness. The choice is totally up to you. I'm just providing the information so you're equipped to make an *informed* decision.

For some items, I will suggest that you will likely need to shop at a natural foods store or a grocery store that has a designated "health food" section (like Baker's or Hy-Vee if you're in Omaha, NE). However, please don't assume that *everything* in a health food store/section is automatically permitted. Just because it's sold in a natural or organic health food store or a "health food" section at the regular grocery store does NOT mean it is free of additives. I wouldn't eat a large percentage of the items sold at many health food stores, especially the *processed* food items!

Regardless of *where* you shop for your food, you must read the *entire* ingredients list on *every* item and compare it to the guidelines provided here before making your purchase. The same holds true for individual products labeled as "natural" or "organic." Read the ingredients list because many of those items contain numerous additives! Conversely, don't assume that you *won't* find what you need at the *regular* grocery store. Additive-free items are slowly becoming more widely available. Many regular grocery stores will special order items for you or begin keeping them in stock if you submit a request, so be sure to inquire about that possibility if you don't find what you're looking for on the shelf.

NAVIGATION TIPS

There are many links within the text of this e-book that will navigate you to other locations within this book. To return to the original page where you clicked the link, click the left arrow key in the toolbar at the top of your screen. If no left arrow key is visible, click on "tools" in your toolbar and select "customize toolbars." Under the "page navigation toolbar" section, mark the boxes next to "previous view" and "next view." (Actually, marking the boxes for *every* option in the "page navigation toolbar" section will help you navigate your way more efficiently through this book.) The left arrow will then appear in your toolbar whenever you use Adobe Reader. Click it anytime you wish to return to the previous page you were viewing.

DISCLAIMERS

My shopping guide is intended to help you find the most additive-free versions of the ingredients and products required for my recipes. This guide is not an *exhaustive* list of *every* food additive used by the food industry. If you see an ingredient listed on a food label that is not discussed in my guide *and* you don't *fully* understand what the word means, then my recommendation is to leave that item on the shelf! Again, do whatever works best for you!

All product recommendations (especially specific brand names and stores) in this guide are subject to change. Always double-check the ingredient labels at the store. Don't just memorize the brand names mentioned in this guide and mindlessly purchase them because companies do change their formulas/ingredients from time to time. It is far more useful for you to learn the *general rules* mentioned here about what to look for in the *ingredients* lists rather than to memorize *particular* brand names.

All store names mentioned in this guide refer to locations in Omaha, NE. Stores in other localities may carry different products. Stores that operate multiple locations within Omaha, NE may not carry the mentioned products at *every* location.

I do not receive any compensation from any companies or retail outlets for any products or businesses that I recommend in this book. My suggestions are well-intended and without bias.

ADDITIVE-FREE



Natural Foods Cookbook



Roasted Chicken (p. 14)



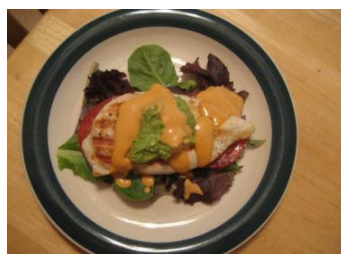
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**Whole-Wheat
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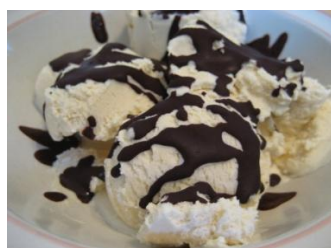
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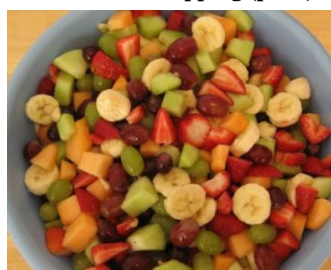
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MAIN DISHES

Roasted Chicken (crock pot)

1 whole chicken
1 onion, sliced
6 large cloves of garlic (minimum), peeled and smashed
Several TBSP of butter
Sea salt and pepper (to taste)

Remove chicken innards and rinse the chicken inside and out. (Also remove neck if there is one, and save it for making broth.) Pat dry, and rub butter all over the skin. Place a few pats of butter and a few cloves of garlic under the skin (between the skin and the meat), too. Place a few of the onion slices, a few cloves of garlic and a few pats of butter *inside* the chicken cavity. Arrange remaining onion slices in bottom of the crock pot. Place the chicken (breast side up) in the crock pot on top of the onions. Sprinkle with salt/pepper.

If you prefer to add liquid, fill the bottom of the crock pot with about 2 inches of water. Cover and cook on low until internal temperature reaches 165°F (about 6-9 hours, depending on the size of chicken). Serves 4 to 6 people when served with a potato or rice dish and some veggies or salad.

TIP – Try additional seasonings. You really can't mess this one up! If you like thyme, rosemary, etc., just toss in some fresh sprigs (or dried flakes)...or try placing some fresh herbs under the skin for additional flavor.

Chicken Caesar Salad

This recipe makes 2 large (main course) portions.
(Note - Dressing must be made in *advance*!)

2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
Sea salt, black pepper and garlic granules – to taste
2 small heads of Romaine lettuce, torn or chopped
Homemade Caesar dressing (p. 35)
Homemade Croutons, optional (p. 36)
Freshly shredded Parmesan cheese, to taste
Freshly ground black pepper (optional)

Season breasts with salt/pepper/garlic granules. Grill over medium-high heat until internal temperature reaches 165°F, flipping once (about 6 minutes per side). Slice or dice meat and toss with lettuce and dressing. Add croutons (optional). Sprinkle with cheese and (optional) freshly ground black pepper, and enjoy!

Balsamic Grilled Chicken

Serves 2

2 skinless, boneless chicken breasts
¼ cup balsamic vinegar
1 ½ TBSP olive oil
½ tsp sea salt, plus more to taste
½ tsp freshly ground black pepper, plus more to taste
Herbes de Provence, to taste (p. 71)

Cut each breast in half. Place the pieces on a cutting board and cover with plastic wrap. Pound gently with the smooth side of a meat mallet to thin/flatten each piece.

Mix together vinegar, olive oil, salt and pepper in a medium bowl or plastic storage bag. Add chicken, and toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate. Marinate 2 to 24 hours until ready to use. Heat grill to medium-high heat. Transfer chicken from marinade to a plate. Sprinkle chicken on both sides with salt, pepper and Herbes de Provence, to taste. Grill chicken until cooked through and internal temperature reaches 165°F, flipping once (about 6 minutes per side). We enjoy this dish served with brown rice and grilled asparagus (p. 30).

Baked (Cheesy) Chicken Breasts or Strips

Boneless, skinless chicken breasts (about 1 per person)
Seasonings (we use garlic & onion granules, sea salt and freshly ground black pepper)
Cheese of your choice (optional) – 1 slice per breast

Preheat oven to 425°F and grease a baking dish or cookie sheet. For strips, cut chicken breasts into strips or nugget-sized pieces. Place chicken in dish and sprinkle with seasonings, to taste. Bake uncovered for 25-30 minutes for *whole* breasts or 15 minutes for *strips*, until internal temperature reaches 165°F and juices run clear.

If making *cheesy* chicken, turn off the oven at this point, and cover all chicken pieces with cheese. Return pan to oven for a couple minutes until cheese is melted. Enjoy!

Southwestern Rice Bowl

Serves 4-6

This recipe is extremely flexible! Below are the items we happen to enjoy in the bowl. Feel free to add or omit ingredients to your preference!

Cilantro Rice (See below for recipe.)

Pico de Gallo (See right-hand column for recipe.)

Avocado

Dice 1 large (or 2 small) avocado and sprinkle with garlic granules, sea salt and a little lime juice, to taste. Or just leave it plain if you prefer.

Sautéed Onions & (optional) Chicken

- 1 to 2 TBSP butter or oil (we like coconut oil)
- 2 medium onions, thinly sliced
- 1 lb boneless, skinless breasts (cut into bite-sized pieces)
- 4 to 6 cloves garlic, pressed or grated

Melt butter or oil in a large skillet (preferably one with a lid). Add onion and sauté until about halfway cooked. Add chicken and cook until meat and onions are both done. (If not using meat, just keep cooking until onions are softened.) Add garlic and cook for about another minute or so. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Stir often, but keep a lid on the pan between stirrings to help keep the chicken moist!

Once everything is done, set it all out like a buffet line and let everyone choose their own toppings. Other tasty topping ideas include: refried beans, shredded Parmesan cheese, salsa and sour cream!

Cilantro Rice

Makes about 6 servings

- 2 cups uncooked rice (we prefer brown Basmati variety)**
- Freshly chopped cilantro (about 1 cup, packed)**
- ¼ tsp sea salt, to taste**
- 1 TBSP fresh lime juice**

Cook rice according to package directions. If you have trouble with your brown rice turning out mushy....just reduce the water amount. I usually reduce the water by about ⅛ cup for every cup that's called for in a recipe.

When rice is done, fluff it with a fork and add cilantro and lime juice. Salt to taste, cover to keep warm, and set aside.

Pico de Gallo

Makes 4 cups

Stir together:

- 4 medium tomatoes, diced**
- 4 green onions, thinly sliced**
- Small bunch cilantro, chopped**
- Juice of ½ - 1 medium lime**

Smothered Chicken

Serves 4

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts**
- 1 TBSP olive oil**
- 1 green pepper, sliced**
- 1 red pepper, sliced**
- 1 onion, sliced**
- ½ cup each: shredded mozzarella and cheddar cheeses**

Spices

- 1 tsp dried oregano**
- ½ tsp sea salt**
- ½ tsp garlic granules**
- ¼ tsp black pepper**
- ¼ tsp ground cayenne pepper**

Preheat oven to 350°F and grease a large casserole dish.

Thin/flatten breasts: place breasts on a cutting board, cover with plastic wrap and beat gently with the smooth side of a meat mallet.

Transfer chicken to casserole dish.

Mix all spices together and spread over chicken breasts.

Bake uncovered for about 20 minutes, until internal temperature reaches 165°F.

While chicken is cooking, heat oil in a large skillet. Add onions and peppers and sauté until tender.

When chicken is done, spoon vegetables over chicken and sprinkle with cheese.

Return to oven until cheese melts. Enjoy!

Southwest Chicken on Baby Greens

Serves 2

2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts (seasoned, to taste, with sea salt, black pepper & garlic granules)
2 handfuls of baby greens
1 tomato, sliced
Simple Guacamole (See right-hand column for recipe.)
Chipotle Mayo (See right-hand column for recipe.)

Grill seasoned chicken breasts over medium-high heat for about 6 minutes per side until cooked through, flipping once. Internal temperature must reach 165°F.

Meanwhile, prepare guacamole and chipotle mayo (or you may prepare these further in advance and store in the fridge). Spread a handful of greens on each plate. Top with slices of tomato. Place grilled chicken on top of tomatoes. Spread guacamole on top of chicken and drizzle with mayo. This dish looks fancy, takes very little time, and tastes amazing!

Southwest Grilled Chicken Sandwich

For each sandwich:

½ boneless, skinless chicken breast
1 bun – Our favorite variety is [Food for Life](#) brand sprouted grain buns. We also prefer our buns grilled or toasted.
Toppings (select your preference):
-sliced tomato
-chipotle mayo (see recipe in right column)
-Pepper Jack cheese (or cheese of your choice)
-black beans: cooked, salted & smashed
-simple guacamole (see recipe in right column)
-lettuce or mixed greens

Place each chicken piece on a cutting board and cover it with plastic wrap. Gently beat it with the smooth side of a meat mallet to flatten. Season with sea salt, black pepper and garlic granules; and grill over medium-high heat until cooked through (internal temperature of 165°F), flipping once. This takes about 6 minutes per side.

Toast buns on grill or in toaster.

Top with your favorite ingredients. Our favorite combo is simple guacamole, chipotle mayo, lettuce and tomato!

Simple Guacamole

1 large avocado
½ tsp garlic granules, to taste
¼ tsp sea salt, to taste
Juice of 1 small lime (optional, but *highly* recommended)

Smash avocado in a bowl with a fork until fairly smooth. Add garlic, salt and lime juice; and stir together.

Chipotle Mayo

Makes about 1 cup

1 TBSP flax meal (p. 68)
3 TBSP water
1 TBSP apple cider vinegar
¼ tsp sea salt
½ tsp dry mustard powder
1 tsp raw honey
¾ cup grapeseed oil (p. 70)
½ - ¾ tsp chipotle powder, to taste

You'll need a stick blender or immersion blender and the accompanying blending cup for this recipe.

Place all ingredients in the cup in the order listed above.

Blend until thick and smooth, lifting blender as needed to incorporate all ingredients. Don't worry if the top-most oil doesn't incorporate. Just remove the blender, and use a spoon to stir it in.

Stir in chipotle powder, to taste. Cover and store in fridge.

NOTE:

If you prefer, you may substitute extra virgin olive oil for the grapeseed oil. Extra virgin olive oil has a much stronger flavor than grapeseed oil, however, so you'll need to significantly increase the amount of honey in your mayo to prevent it from tasting too bitter.

Chicken

Fettuccini Alfredo

Makes 4 small servings

8 oz. dried fettuccini (whole-wheat or brown rice variety)
2 TBSP butter
1 cup heavy cream (or whole milk)
½ tsp sea salt
¼ tsp garlic granules
⅛ tsp freshly ground black pepper
½ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
Extra grated or finely shredded Parmesan cheese, for topping (optional)
2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts (*Meat is optional if you prefer to use this recipe as a side dish, instead!*)

Cook fettuccini according to package directions. Meanwhile, in a large saucepan, melt butter. Then add cream (or whole milk), salt, garlic and pepper and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and boil gently for 3 to 5 minutes or until mixture begins to thicken. If using leftover cooked chicken, add to sauce once it thickens and let the meat warm through. Remove from heat and stir in 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese. Drain pasta. Add pasta to sauce. Toss to combine. Serve immediately. If desired, sprinkle with additional Parmesan cheese. (If using raw chicken, chop into bite-sized pieces and sauté in oil in a separate pan until done. Season with salt, pepper, garlic, etc. Or just season the chicken and throw it on the grill. Then slice and serve atop the pasta.)

Chicken & Noodles

Serves 6

1 whole chicken
1 large onion, peeled and sliced
Salt, pepper and garlic granules (to taste)
6 cups water
1 – 1 ½ lb egg noodles

Place onion slices in the bottom of the crock pot. Remove chicken innards and rinse the chicken inside and out. Place chicken on top of onions. Sprinkle with salt, pepper and garlic granules. Add water, and cook on Low for 6-10 hours (depending on the size of the chicken) until internal temperature reaches 165°F.

Remove chicken from crock pot. Strain juice into large stock pot. Discard onions. Bring juice to a boil and cook egg noodles in it until desired tenderness. While noodles are cooking, remove meat from the chicken carcass. Discard the bones and skin. Shred the meat. Do NOT drain the noodles! When noodles are done, simply add the meat to the pot. Season with salt, pepper and garlic granules to taste. Enjoy! Freezes well for later use!

Baked Chicken & Rice

Serves 4

4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
1 cup long grain brown rice, uncooked
1 ½ cups chicken (p. 33) or vegetable (p. 91) broth
2 medium tomatoes, chopped
½ medium onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
2 tsp dried oregano
Shredded Parmesan cheese (optional)
Hot sauce or red pepper flakes (optional)
Salt and pepper, to taste

Preheat oven to 400°F. Place chicken breasts in an ungreased casserole dish. Combine uncooked rice, broth, tomatoes, onion, garlic and oregano in a medium bowl.

Pour mixture over chicken. Cover tightly with foil and bake for 50-60 minutes until chicken is cooked through (internal temperature of 165°F) and rice is tender. Salt & pepper to taste. Serve with optional hot sauce, red pepper flakes and Parmesan cheese.

Dijon Chicken Fettuccini

Serves 2

1 TBSP olive oil
2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts,
cut into bite-sized pieces
Salt & pepper, to taste
¼ cup Chardonnay wine
½ TBSP Dijon mustard
½ cup heavy cream
¼ cup finely diced fresh chives
½ cup freshly diced tomatoes
8 oz. dried fettuccini (whole-wheat or brown rice variety)

Prepare fettuccini according to package directions.

Meanwhile, heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add chicken pieces and cook until golden brown, flipping occasionally. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Remove chicken from pan and set aside.

Add wine and mustard to the pan and bring to a boil.

Add cream and continue cooking until sauce reduces and thickens, stirring frequently (about 5 minutes). Season with salt and pepper.

Add chicken, chives and tomatoes; heat through. Drain pasta and add to sauce, tossing to coat. Serve.

Chicken & Gravy over Rice

Serves 6-8

1 stick (½ cup) butter
1 cup finely diced celery
1 cup unbleached white flour
2 cups homemade chicken broth (p. 33)
2 cups milk
2 tsp sea salt
1 tsp black pepper
1 cup water
Double batch of Dry Onion Soup Mix (p. 52)
8 pieces chicken (any cuts; with or without skin/bones)

In a medium saucepan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add diced celery and sauté until tender (about 15 minutes), stirring occasionally.

Add flour, ¼ cup at a time. Stirring until combined and then adding the next ¼ cup. Mixture will have a consistency similar to cookie dough at this point.

Add broth. Turn heat to high and bring to a boil, whisking constantly until it thickens to a “gravy-like” consistency.

Add milk, salt and pepper. Continue whisking over high heat until “cake batter” consistency is reached (about 5 additional minutes).

Stir in water and Dry Onion Soup Mix.

OVEN

Arrange chicken pieces in a single layer in a large, ungreased glass casserole dish. Pour gravy mixture over the chicken. Cover with foil. Bake, covered, at 325°F for 60 minutes. Uncover and bake 30 additional minutes.

CROCK POT

Arrange chicken pieces in crock pot. Pour gravy mixture over the chicken. Cook on low for about 5 hours.

Make sure chicken reaches an internal temperature of 165°F before serving.

While chicken is cooking, prepare enough brown rice for 6-8 people. Serve chicken and gravy over the cooked rice.

Chicken & Noodle Casserole

Serves 6-8

12 oz. dried pasta (egg noodles, shells, elbow, etc.)
1 TBSP olive oil
⅔ cup chopped onion
1 garlic clove, minced
1 ½ lbs boneless/skinless chicken breasts,
cut into bite-sized pieces
1 ¾ cups homemade chicken broth (p. 33)
1 ½ cups chopped carrots
3 celery stalks/ribs, chopped
3 TBSP butter
3 TBSP unbleached white flour
¾ tsp sea salt
⅛ tsp black pepper
1 ½ cups milk
1 ¼ cups freshly shredded Cheddar cheese

Prepare pasta according to package directions. Drain and rinse.

Meanwhile, heat oil in a large non-stick skillet over medium-high heat. Sauté onion and garlic in oil until tender.

Add chicken. Cook, stirring frequently, just until chicken is no longer pink.

Add broth, carrots and celery. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 10-15 minutes until vegetables are tender and chicken is cooked through.

Meanwhile, melt butter in a saucepan over medium-high heat. Stir in the flour, salt and pepper until smooth. Gradually add milk. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Remove from the heat; stir in cheese until melted. Pour over chicken mixture. Add drained noodles and toss to combine.

Transfer mixture to a greased, 3-quart glass baking dish. Bake, uncovered, at 350°F for 15-20 minutes or until bubbly.

Roast with Veggies (crock pot)

Serves 4

2 – 2 ½ lb roast
1 large onion, thinly sliced
4 carrots, scrubbed and chopped (no need to peel!)
12 small potatoes, scrubbed and chopped in half
4 cups water
Double batch of Homemade Dry Onion soup mix (p. 52)

In a large skillet, brown roast on all sides. Transfer to crock pot, and add veggies. Stir onion soup mix into water and pour mixture over meat and veggies. Cook on Low setting for 8-10 hours, until internal temperature reaches at least 145°F. Enjoy! (Pour extra juice over meat and veggies when serving!)

Grilled Steak

Allow meat to come to room temperature before cooking (about 1 hour). Preheat gas grill on High. Lightly brush each side of steak with olive oil, and season both sides liberally with salt and pepper (we like garlic granules, too). Total cooking time depends on steak thickness (about 10 minutes for a 1-inch steak). Grill steak for 2 minutes, then rotate a half turn. Cook 2 more minutes. Flip steak over and repeat. Check for doneness (145°F for medium-rare). Remove from grill and cover with foil. Allow meat to rest 5-10 minutes before serving; the internal temperature will rise and juices will distribute so they don't run out on your plate!

Beef Stroganoff

Serves 4

1 lb round steak or sirloin steak, ¼-inch thick
3 TBSP butter
1 small yellow onion, diced
4 oz. fresh mushrooms, sliced or diced (optional)
1 cup water
2 homemade beef bouillon cubes (p. 52)
3 TBSP whole-wheat flour
1 cup sour cream
12-oz. dried whole-wheat egg noodles (or rotini)

Cut meat into small chunks or thin strips and sprinkle with salt and pepper, to taste. Set aside. Dissolve bouillon cubes in 1 cup of water. Set aside. Cook noodles according to package directions. Meanwhile, melt butter over medium-high heat, add onion (and mushrooms, if using) and sauté until tender. Add meat and brown it. Then add water/bouillon mixture. Stir flour and sour cream together, and add to the hot mixture. Cook and stir until mixture thickens. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Drain noodles and stir them into the sauce or serve the meat sauce over the plain noodles, instead.

Skillet Casserole (Rice)

Serves 4-6

1 lb lean ground beef
½ small onion, diced
½ small green pepper, diced
½ jalapeno, finely diced (optional)
1 cup uncooked brown rice (we like Basmati)
2 cups water
2 large tomatoes, diced (about 2 cups)
½ cup freshly shredded Parmesan cheese
Salt, garlic granules and black pepper to taste

In a large skillet that has a lid, brown the onions, green pepper, jalapeno (optional) and ground beef. Season to taste with salt, pepper and garlic granules. If necessary, spoon off excess fat. Add the uncooked rice, water, and tomatoes. Mix thoroughly. Turn heat to high and let mixture come to a boil. Cover and simmer over medium heat for about 1 hour. There's no need to stir; just let it cook until rice is tender. Sprinkle in cheese and stir. Add salt and pepper to taste, and serve. This dish freezes well!

Skillet Casserole (Pasta)

Serves 4-6

8 oz. dried whole-wheat or brown rice pasta (elbow, rotini or penne shapes work well)
1 lb lean ground beef
1 medium onion, finely chopped
1 (6 oz.) can tomato paste
1 (6 oz.) can water
1 TBSP dried basil
1 TBSP dried oregano
¼ tsp sea salt
1 tsp onion granules
2 tsp garlic granules
¼ – ½ tsp red pepper flakes (optional)
½ cup freshly shredded cheese (we prefer ¼ cup each of mozzarella and mild cheddar)
Freshly grated Parmesan cheese (optional)

Cook pasta according to package instructions. Drain and set aside. Meanwhile, in a large skillet, sauté onions and ground beef over medium to high heat until the beef is browned. Season to taste with garlic granules, sea salt and black pepper. Add tomato paste, water, salt, pepper and seasonings; and stir until combined. Cover and simmer for about 10 minutes. Toss cooked pasta with this mixture. Sprinkle with shredded cheese. Cover and cook a few minutes over low heat until cheese is melted. Serve with freshly grated Parmesan (optional)!

Garlic-Lime Marinated Steak

6 servings

1 cup roughly chopped garlic cloves (about 3 bulbs)
½ cup freshly squeezed lime juice (about 6 large limes)
½ cup olive oil
¼ cup soy sauce or tamari (p. 81, 88 & 89)
1 bunch roughly chopped fresh cilantro, leaves and stems
1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and diced (optional)
1 tsp cumin powder
1 TBSP freshly ground black pepper
1 ½ to 2 lbs sirloin steak

Combine the garlic, lime juice, olive oil, soy sauce, cilantro, jalapeno, cumin, and black pepper in a re-sealable plastic gallon bag. Add the steak and let marinate in refrigerator for 2-24 hours. Remove from refrigerator and allow mixture to sit at room temperature for 30 to 60 minutes prior to cooking. Heat grill to medium-high heat. Remove steak from marinade. Transfer marinade to a small sauce pan and boil for about 10 minutes. Strain and reserve juice; dispose of strained items (garlic, cilantro, etc.).

Grill steak for 7 minutes. Flip and cook an additional 3 to 5 minutes, depending on desired doneness (internal temperature of 145°F for medium-rare). Transfer steak to a cutting board, cover with foil and let rest for 5 minutes. Slice and serve with strained juice, homemade guacamole (p. 52), Pico de Gallo (p. 52) and optional corn chips (p. 43).

Shredded Beef with Peppers (crock pot)

Serves 4

1 ½ lb sirloin steak
2 bell peppers, sliced (any colors)
2 medium onions, thinly sliced
8 oz. can tomato sauce
½ cup soy sauce or tamari (p. 81, 88 & 89)
½ cup water
1 TBSP anchovy paste
1 TBSP apple cider vinegar
1 TBSP sugar (white cane sugar)
1 tsp sea salt

Place steak in crock pot and top with sliced peppers and onions. In a small bowl, combine tomato sauce, soy sauce, water, anchovy paste and vinegar. Pour mixture over peppers. Cook on high for 1 hour and then low for 7 hours. Remove steak and shred; return to crock pot. Turn off heat, add sugar and salt, and stir to combine. Cover and let stand for 15 minutes. Serve over mashed potatoes or brown rice.

Classic Grilled Burgers

Makes 3 patties

1 lb ground beef
Sea salt, to taste
Black pepper, to taste
Garlic granules, to taste

Preheat gas grill to medium-high heat (about 375°F).

Divide meat into 3 patties. Make the patties thinner in middle and thicker at the edges, so you end up with flat burgers after they cook. Season both sides of patties with salt, pepper and garlic granules. Grill for 7 minutes. Flip. Grill for about 4 more minutes, until desired doneness (minimum internal temperature of 155°F).

*Especially with *grass-fed* beef, rare to medium-rare is the desired level of doneness to prevent dryness!

Meatloaf

Serves 4-6

4 ½ tsp dry onion flakes
2 tsp onion granules
¼ tsp celery salt
¾ tsp sea salt
½ tsp black pepper
¼ tsp garlic granules
1 egg
¼ cup water
⅓ cup quick oats
1 lb lean ground beef
¼ - ½ cup ketchup (p. 52 and p. 72)

Combine dry seasonings in a medium mixing bowl. Add egg and water and mix well. Stir in oats. Using your hands, mix in the beef until just combined; do not over mix. Form mixture into a loaf in an ungreased casserole pan and top with ketchup.

Bake uncovered at 350°F for 45-60 minutes. Check middle for doneness. Internal temperature should reach at least 155°F. Let sit for 10 minutes before serving. Serve with extra ketchup for dipping!

Baked potatoes (p. 29) are a great side dish for meatloaf! Pop the potatoes into the oven with the meatloaf, and it will all be ready at the same time! Warm up some green beans, and you have one of our family's *favorite* meals!

Grilled Salmon & Zucchini with Dill Vinaigrette

Serves 4

4 salmon steaks (6 oz. each), skinless
3-4 medium zucchini

Dill Vinaigrette

½ cup olive oil
¼ cup fresh lemon juice
1 TBSP chopped fresh dill or 1 tsp dried dill
1 tsp freshly-pressed garlic
½ tsp sea salt
¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper
¼ tsp Dijon mustard

Whisk vinaigrette ingredients together in a small bowl. Cover. Let stand at room temperature for 2 hours or refrigerate up to 24 hours. Divide into 2 bowls (½ for basting fish and ½ for basting zucchini).

Heat grill to medium-high. Brush sauce onto one side of the fish, and place fish on grill sauce-side-down; then brush the top side with sauce, as well. Cook about 4-7 minutes per side, depending on thickness of your steaks. Before flipping fish, check bottom for doneness. If you flip it too early, the fish may stick to the grill. Cook until internal temperature reaches at least 145°F and thickest part of fish flakes easily with a fork.

Cut off and discard the ends of each zucchini. Slice lengthwise into 1/4"-thick slices; brush both sides with dill sauce. Grill over medium-high heat about 3 minutes per side.

Homemade Fish Sticks

Serves 4

¾ lb firm-fleshed white fish fillets (e.g., sole or cod)
1 egg
¾ cup homemade breadcrumbs (p. 43)
¾ cup freshly shredded Parmesan cheese
½ tsp sea salt
2 tsp garlic granules

Cut fillets into strips or nuggets. Whisk egg in a small mixing bowl. Combine breadcrumbs, cheese, salt and garlic granules in a separate shallow bowl or plate. Preheat oven to broil ("Hi" setting), and lightly grease a baking sheet.

Dip fish into eggs a few pieces at a time. Allow excess egg to drip off; then roll in breadcrumb mixture. (Coat each piece REALLY well by pressing the mixture onto the fish. Then flip over and press more breading onto the other side.)

Broil 5 minutes; flip and cook about 5 more minutes, until crisp. Oven times may vary, so watch carefully to avoid burning. Cook until internal temperature reaches at least 145°F and thickest part of fish flakes easily with a fork.

Pan-Seared Cajun Shrimp

Serves 2

1 lb shrimp, peeled & deveined
1 TBSP olive oil
1 ½ tsp Cajun Spice Mix (see recipe below)

Rinse shrimp and pat dry.

In a large bowl, combine the oil and 1½ tsp Cajun spice mix. Add the shrimp and toss to coat with the spice mixture. Marinate 10 minutes.

In a large nonstick skillet, cook the shrimp over medium-high heat just until they turn pink, about 2-3 minutes per side.

Cajun Spice Mix

Makes 2 ½ TBSP. In a small bowl, stir together:

1 TBSP garlic granules
1 ½ tsp onion granules
1 ½ tsp sea salt
½ tsp ground black pepper
¼ tsp ground cayenne pepper
¼ tsp ground cumin
¼ tsp dried oregano
¼ tsp paprika

**Store extra dry spice mix in an airtight container for future use.*

Blackened Fish

Serves 2

½ tsp paprika
½ tsp sea salt
½ tsp garlic granules
¼ tsp ground cayenne pepper
½ tsp dried oregano
12 oz. skinless fish fillets (we like cod, sole or tilapia)

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a casserole pan.

Mix seasonings together in a small bowl. Liberally coat both sides of fish with seasoning. This seasoning is fairly spicy. For less heat, sprinkle seasoning *lightly* rather than coating the flesh *entirely*.

Bake uncovered for about 15 minutes, until internal temperature reaches at least 145°F and thickest part of fish flakes easily with a fork. (This seasoning works well with chicken, too!)

Salmon or Tuna Patties

Serves 2-3

1 egg
¼ tsp sea salt
½ tsp black pepper
½ tsp garlic granules
½ cup quick oats
1 (4.5 oz. – 6 oz.) can of salmon or tuna, drained
Butter or grapeseed oil – about 1 TBSP (optional)

Beat egg in a mixing bowl. Add dry seasonings and stir. Add oats and stir. Mix in salmon or tuna until combined. Form into 2 or 3 patties with your hands.

Cook in a non-stick skillet over medium heat until browned and heated through, about 3-5 minutes per side. (For added flavor, melt a little butter or oil in the pan before adding patties.)

TIP: It's best to only flip these patties *once* or they might fall apart, so check for desired brownness before flipping.

Tuna & Noodle Casserole

Serves 4

8 oz. dried whole-wheat egg noodles
2 cups homemade Condensed Cream of Celery Soup (p. 33)
¾ cup water
2 (6 oz.) cans tuna (may substitute canned chicken)
1 cup frozen peas
Sea salt, pepper and garlic granules (to taste)

Preheat oven to 325°F.

Cook noodles in a large pot according to package directions. Drain.

While noodles are still in the strainer, mix all other ingredients together in the noodle pot. Return noodles to the pan and toss to coat. Add salt, pepper and garlic granules to taste. (If you're in a big hurry, you can just warm everything together in this pan and serve, but this is not the preferred method.)

Transfer mixture to a large greased casserole dish and cover with foil. Bake for about 25 minutes, until heated through.

This casserole freezes well, so make extra for later use and thaw as needed for a quick meal!

Easy Baked Fish

Serves 2

½ - ¾ lb fish (We prefer turbot, cod or tilapia because they're the least "fishy" tasting to us.)
Seasonings of choice - garlic granules, sea salt, black pepper, ground cayenne pepper, etc.
Fresh lemon juice (optional)

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a glass baking dish (we use coconut oil for this). Place fillets in pan and season to taste. Bake uncovered for about 15 minutes until internal temperature reaches 145°F and thickest part of fish flakes easily with a fork. Alternatively, you can use your oven's broiler setting (on High) and cook for about 5-7 minutes. Add a squeeze of lemon juice (optional) and serve.

Shrimp Scampi

Serves 4

8 oz. dried pasta (fettuccini or angel hair)

CREAM SAUCE:

3 TBSP butter
3 TBSP unbleached white flour
1 tsp sea salt
Black pepper, to taste
1 ½ cups milk

Melt butter in medium saucepan over low heat. Stir in flour, whisking constantly to prevent clumping. Increase heat to achieve a slow boil; continue cooking and stirring for 2 minutes. Continue whisking while slowly adding the milk. Add salt and pepper. Continue cooking and whisking until desired thickness is reached. Cover and set aside.

SHRIMP:

3 TBSP butter
1 TBSP minced shallots or red onion
2-4 large garlic cloves, minced
1 lb shrimp, peeled & deveined (rinsed & patted dry)
½ cup dry white wine
Pinch of dried oregano
Sea salt & black pepper, to taste
½ TBSP fresh chives, chopped

Melt butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Sauté garlic and shallots (or red onion) for 1-2 minutes. Add shrimp and sauté just until pink, stirring occasionally (about 3 to 5 minutes). Remove shrimp and set aside. Add remaining ingredients to skillet. Cook until wine is reduced to ½ of the original amount. Add cream sauce and stir to combine. Add a little more milk if sauce is too thick. Add shrimp to the sauce, stir and heat through. Serve over pasta or just add the noodles into the sauce and toss to combine.

Chicken Parmesan

Serves 4

4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
2 eggs
1 cup homemade breadcrumbs (p. 43)
½ cup freshly shredded Parmesan cheese, plus extra for serving
4 large slices Mozzarella cheese
Marinara Sauce (see recipe below)

Preheat oven to 450°F. Grease a large baking sheet.

Place each breast on a cutting board and cover with plastic wrap. Pound gently with the smooth side of a meat mallet to thin/flatten each piece.

Place eggs in a shallow bowl and whisk. Combine breadcrumbs and Parmesan cheese on a plate. Coat each breast with egg; allow excess egg to drip off. Then coat each one with breadcrumb mixture. Place breaded breasts on baking sheet; bake uncovered for 10 minutes. Flip and bake about 10 more minutes, until cooked through (internal temperature of 165°F). While chicken is baking, prepare marinara sauce as directed below.

When chicken is done, turn off the oven. Top each breast with mozzarella and return to warm oven until cheese is melted. When serving, spoon marinara over each breast and sprinkle with additional Parmesan cheese. This is great served with pasta, too!

Marinara Sauce

Makes 2 cups (16 oz.)

1 (6 oz.) can tomato paste
2 (6 oz.) cans water
1 TBSP raw honey
1 TBSP dried basil
1 TBSP dried oregano
¼ tsp sea salt
1 tsp onion granules
2 tsp garlic granules
¼ - ½ tsp red pepper flakes (optional)

Whisk all ingredients together until smooth. In a small sauce pan, bring to a boil. Cover and simmer on low heat for 30 minutes.

TIP – Save time by making a bulk-sized batch and freezing it in portions of whatever size you use. Just let sauce cool completely before pouring into freezer bags or sealed containers. Make sure you label each bag/container (and include a date), so you don't forget what's in there!

Southwestern Quinoa Salad

Serves 4-6

1 ½ cups dry, uncooked quinoa
15-oz. can black beans, rinsed and drained
1 cup frozen corn (or 1 yellow bell pepper, diced)
1 red bell pepper, diced
1 orange bell pepper, diced
6-9 small green onions, thinly sliced
1 jalapeno (optional), seeded and minced
¾ cup freshly chopped cilantro (about 1 large bunch)

Dressing

½ cup + 1 TBSP fresh lime juice (about 2-3 limes)
½ cup extra virgin olive oil
1 TBSP sea salt
1 ½ tsp black pepper
1 TBSP cumin powder
1 ½ tsp chili powder
¾ tsp garlic granules
3 dashes ground cayenne pepper

Cook quinoa according to package directions and cool completely. Meanwhile, in a large bowl stir together beans, bell peppers, corn (if using), green onions, jalapeno (optional) and cilantro. Add cooled quinoa. In a small bowl whisk together lime juice, extra virgin olive oil, salt, pepper, cumin, chili powder, garlic granules and ground cayenne pepper. Pour dressing over the quinoa mixture and stir to combine. Cover and refrigerate for several hours before serving to allow flavors to marinate. Enjoy cold!

Pasta with Meat Sauce

Serves 4

16 oz. dried pasta (we prefer rotini or spaghetti)
½ lb lean ground beef
1 green pepper, diced
1 onion, diced
½ TBSP fennel seed
½ tsp dried basil
¼ tsp dried oregano
½ tsp garlic granules
¼ tsp red pepper flakes
¾ tsp sea salt
¼ tsp black pepper
1 (6-oz.) can tomato paste
2 (6-oz.) cans water
1 TBSP raw honey (optional)

Cook pasta according to package directions. Meanwhile, sauté beef, onion and pepper over medium-high heat. When meat is cooked through and veggies are tender, add remaining ingredients. Stir until tomato paste is fully incorporated. Pour warm sauce over prepared pasta.

Lasagna

Serves 6-8

Lasagna is a pain, so when I heard it was possible to *avoid* pre-cooking the noodles, I was all over it! Of course, if you enjoy that type of thing, then pre-cook away; but omit the 2 cups of water below and use the instructions on your lasagna box as a guide for cooking times, instead.

1 box whole-wheat lasagna noodles, uncooked
32 oz. (4 cups) homemade Marinara Sauce
(double the recipe on page 23)
1 lb Homemade Italian Sausage (see recipe below)
4 oz. Mozzarella cheese, freshly shredded
4 oz. Provolone cheese, freshly shredded
2 cups water

Grease a 9" x 13" baking pan; and preheat oven to 350°F.

Prepare a double batch of the Marinara Sauce recipe on page 23. While sauce simmers, prepare meat according to recipe below.

Meanwhile, mix Mozzarella and Provolone cheeses together and set aside.

Reserve ½ cup of cheese for later. Coat the bottom of the baking dish with about 1 cup of marinara. Place a layer of 3 uncooked noodles on top of sauce. Top with a thin layer of sauce, then 1/3 of the meat and 1/3 of the cheese. Repeat with remaining ingredients. Top the final layer of noodles with sauce only. Do NOT add the reserved ½ cup of cheese at this point. Pour 2 cups of water around the edges of the noodles. Cover tightly with foil, and bake for 60 minutes.

Remove foil and bake an additional 15 minutes to thicken the sauce. Top with reserved ½ cup of cheese and return to oven until cheese is melted, about 5 minutes. Remove from oven and let rest 15 minutes. Cut and serve!

Homemade Italian Sausage

1 lb lean ground beef or unseasoned ground pork
½ TBSP fennel seed
½ tsp dried basil
¼ tsp dried oregano
½ tsp garlic granules
¼ tsp red pepper flakes
1 tsp sea salt
¼ tsp black pepper

Brown meat in a skillet over high heat. Drain fat, if necessary. Add seasonings and simmer over low heat for a few minutes to let flavors combine. Use sausage in your favorite recipe! Great for lasagna, pizza, spaghetti, etc.

Beef Stir-Fry

Serves 4

MARINADE

3 TBSP soy sauce or tamari (p. 81, 88 & 89)
1 TBSP dry sherry
¼ tsp ground ginger
½ tsp garlic granules

1 lb sirloin or flank steak, sliced very thin

2 TBSP cooking oil (we like sesame oil for this recipe)
1 large onion, thinly sliced
1 green bell pepper, thinly sliced
1 yellow bell pepper, thinly sliced
1 red bell pepper, thinly sliced
2 TBSP soy sauce or tamari (p. 81, 88 & 89)
1-2 tsp freshly pressed garlic

Whisk marinade ingredients together in a medium bowl. Add slices of meat and toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour. Heat oil in large skillet or wok over medium-high heat. Add onions and stir-fry for 3 minutes. Add peppers and stir-fry 3 more minutes. Add meat, marinade and additional soy sauce; and stir-fry for 4 minutes or until meat is cooked through. Add fresh garlic and stir-fry one more minute. Season to taste with salt and/or additional soy sauce. Serve over rice of your choice.

Chinese Fried Rice

Serves 2 (as a main dish)

It's best to cook the rice several hours in *advance*, so it has time to chill *completely* before making this recipe!

1 cup brown Basmati rice (or rice of your choice)
1-2 TBSP cooking oil (we like coconut oil)
¾ cup frozen peas and carrots
3-4 TBSP soy sauce or tamari, to taste (p. 81, 88 & 89)
3 eggs, beaten
2 large green onions, thinly sliced

Cook rice according to package directions, but reduce the water amount by about 1/4 cup, so the rice won't be mushy. Place cooked rice in fridge until completely chilled.

Then, heat oil in a huge skillet or wok over high heat. Add chilled rice and peas and carrots and cook until heated through. Add soy sauce, to taste, and cook until desired consistency is reached (I like mine a bit "crunchy," so I let it cook a while "undisturbed" and then flip, etc.). Once rice reaches desired consistency, scramble eggs in a separate pan. Stir eggs into the rice. Add green onions and cook until just heated (about 1 minute). I don't cook my green onions much because I like them firm, but do as you prefer.

Pizza

Serves 4-6 adults

Select a crust recipe from this page or one of your own. Preheat oven as directed by selected crust recipe. Prepare pizza sauce by stirring the following ingredients together in a bowl:

Pizza Sauce

1 (6 oz.) can tomato paste
3 oz. water (just fill the tomato paste can ½ full)
1 TBSP olive oil
1 clove garlic, pressed (or ¼ tsp garlic granules)
1 TBSP raw honey
¼ tsp red pepper flakes
1 tsp dried basil
1 ½ tsp dried oregano
⅛ tsp sea salt
2 TBSP freshly grated Parmesan cheese (optional)

If using a crust recipe from this page, bake crust for 10 minutes and remove from oven. Add pizza sauce, toppings* of your choice, and cheese. Sprinkle some dried oregano on top of the cheese for added color if you'd like. Bake 10-15 more minutes, until cheese begins to brown. Let stand 10 minutes before cutting/serving...unless you *enjoy* burning the roof of your mouth! ☺

*Topping ideas:

8 oz. freshly shredded cheese
(Mozzarella, Provolone or both!)
1 lb ground beef (browned, drained and seasoned to taste)
Homemade Italian Sausage (recipe on previous page)
1 small onion, finely diced
1 small bell pepper (any color), finely diced
4 large mushrooms, finely diced
Black olives, sliced or diced

Thick Pizza Crust

This crust requires rising time, so begin preparation about 1 ½ hours before you plan to eat.

2 cups flour (white, whole-wheat, or half of each)
1 (¼ oz.) package *instant or quick rising yeast* (p. 93)
½ tsp sea salt
1 tsp garlic granules
1 cup hot water (120-130°F)
1 TBSP butter (for brushing on top)

Mix dry ingredients together in a medium bowl (a wire whisk works great for this). Add hot water and stir with a spoon to combine.

Lightly flour a clean countertop space. Knead dough on counter for about 5-8 minutes, dusting with flour as needed. Cover the dough and let rest 10 minutes.

Lightly grease a cookie sheet (butter works well for this). Stretch dough onto the cookie sheet to form a large rectangle, making a ridge around the edge to form a crust. (Note: If you'd like an end crust on *every* slice, divide your crust in half and form *two* rectangular pizzas on the cookie sheet.)

Melt butter and brush it on top of crust. Cover and let rise 30 more minutes. Meanwhile, prepare sauce and toppings as directed in left-hand column of this page. **Then preheat oven to 375°F, and follow the cooking instructions for the "Pizza" recipe in the left-hand column of this page.**

Quick (Thin) Pizza Crust

1 ½ cups whole-wheat flour or whole spelt flour
(white flour also works well, or use half and half)
1 tsp aluminum-free baking powder
¼ tsp sea salt
1 tsp garlic granules
1 TBSP dried oregano
¾ cup water

Grease a large cookie sheet with butter or oil, and **preheat oven to 400°F.**

In a large bowl, combine flour, baking powder and seasonings. Mix well. Add water, mixing until all ingredients are moistened.

With your (floured) hands, work dough into a ball. Place dough on greased pan and press to form a crust; you need to press pretty hard and keep stretching dough out until you have a roughly circular or rectangular crust. The crust will seem *really* thin and may start to tear (just pinch dough back together at tear sites). If it seems *TOO* thin, it's probably just right! ☺ **Follow the cooking instructions for the "Pizza" recipe in left-hand column of this page.**

Taco Meat

1 lb ground beef (or meat of your choice)
1 medium onion, diced (optional)
1 small jalapeno, seeded and minced (optional)
¾ cup water
2 tsp chili powder (homemade recipe on p. 51)
1 ½ tsp paprika
1 ½ tsp ground cumin
1 tsp onion granules
3 ¼ tsp garlic granules
½ tsp sea salt

Makes 4-6 servings

Brown 1 lb of meat (e.g., ground beef/bison or thinly sliced steak or chicken breasts), along with (optional) onions and jalapeno, in a large skillet over high heat until cooked through. (You may wish to add a bit of oil to the pan first if using a meat other than ground beef.) Once meat is cooked through, add the water and dry seasonings. Stir until seasonings dissolve. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, over low heat until desired consistency is reached (about 10 minutes).

Enchilada Sauce

Makes 4 cups

1 tsp olive oil
½ cup diced onion
1 tsp minced fresh garlic
½ cup vegetable broth (p. 91) or chicken broth (p. 33)
1 TBSP chili powder (recipe on p. 51)
1 TBSP raw honey
1 tsp ground cumin
½ tsp sea salt
2 (6-oz.) cans tomato paste
3 (6-oz.) cans water

Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add onion and garlic; sauté 5 minutes or until tender. Stir in remaining ingredients. Cover and reduce heat; simmer 30 minutes.

TIP - Make a double batch (or more), and freeze some for future use!

Beef Enchiladas

Makes 6 large enchiladas

4 cups homemade Enchilada Sauce (*left column*)
1 batch homemade Taco Meat, made with ground beef (*see left column*)
6 (multi-grain) tortillas (p. 90)
8-12 oz. freshly shredded cheese
(we use cheddar or Pepper Jack)

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Prepare Enchilada Sauce (*see left column*).

While sauce is simmering, prepare Taco Meat (*see left column*).

Spread tortillas out on a flat surface and coat each one with a thin layer of sauce. Divide Taco Meat evenly between the 6 tortillas. Sprinkle desired amount of cheese onto each tortilla (reserving some for topping), and roll each tortilla closed.

Grease a large glass baking dish. Cover the bottom of the pan with a thin layer of sauce, so the tortillas don't dry out on the bottom.

Place rolled enchiladas in the pan and cover evenly with remaining sauce, making sure edges are covered well.

Bake uncovered for 30 minutes, until bubbly & warm.

Sprinkle with desired amount of cheese, and bake just until cheese is melted.

Serve with salsa, sour cream, guacamole, etc.

Quesadillas

Multi-grain tortillas, 1 or 2 per person (p. 90)
Freshly shredded cheese (we prefer Pepper Jack cheese)
Butter or oil (optional)
Other fillings of your choice (optional):
 -Refried beans
 -Taco Meat (p. 26)
 -Sautéed diced peppers/onions/jalapenos/etc.

Prepare Taco Meat (p. 26) if using.

Prepare veggies, if using. Just sauté the diced veggies in a bit of oil over high heat until tender.

Lay tortilla flat, and add toppings to one side. Fold empty half over on top of the filling. Don't overfill. Just put a thin layer of each ingredient; these should remain relatively flat!

Heat a skillet over medium-high heat. Add oil or butter (optional), spread it evenly around the pan, and heat through. (We find oil/butter isn't necessary with the multi-grain tortillas we use. They become nice and crispy and full of flavor without it!)

Place one or 2 folded quesadillas in pan (depending on the size of your pan). Cook 2-4 minutes, until brown and crispy. Flip and cook on the other side until brown and crispy.

Cut into 4 pieces and serve. We enjoy these plain, but you could also serve with salsa, guacamole, sour cream, etc.

*Our favorite fillings are Chicken Taco Meat (p. 26) and Pepper Jack cheese, but experiment with whatever combinations interest you. For example:

- Cheese only
- Refried Beans & Cheese
- Beef Taco Meat (p. 26) & Cheese
- Chicken Taco Meat (p. 26) & Cheese
- Sautéed Veggies & Cheese

...use your imagination!!!

Taco Salad

Serves 4-6

1 lb Taco Meat (p. 26)
Homemade French Dressing (p. 35)
3 heads Romaine lettuce, chopped or shredded
2 green onions, thinly sliced
2 medium tomatoes, diced
Freshly shredded cheese (optional)

Prepare Taco Meat (p. 26) and French Dressing (p. 35).

Arrange all ingredients and toppings as an assembly line, and allow each guest to build their own salad. Serve with corn chips (p. 43), homemade Pico de Gallo (fresh salsa) and guacamole (p.52) if you'd like!

Cuban Black Beans & Rice

Serves 4

1 ½ cups dry rice (we like brown Basmati)
1 TBSP olive oil
1 medium red onion, diced
1 garlic clove, minced
1 red bell pepper, diced
2 (15-oz.) cans black beans, rinsed and drained
1 ½ cups vegetable (p. 91) or chicken (p. 33) broth
1 TBSP apple cider vinegar
1 tsp dried oregano
¼ - ½ tsp red pepper flakes, to taste (optional)
¼ cup freshly squeezed lime juice
1 cup freshly chopped cilantro
Sea salt and pepper

Prepare rice according to package instructions. Meanwhile, heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add onion, garlic and bell pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally until onion is softened, about 8-10 minutes.

Add beans, broth, vinegar and oregano. Continue cooking over medium heat, mashing some of the beans with the back of a spoon (or with a potato masher) until sauce thickens slightly, 6-8 minutes. Remove from heat, and stir in red pepper flakes (optional), lime juice and cilantro. Add rice and stir to combine. Season to taste with salt/pepper.

This dish freezes well, so make extra in advance for a great "dinner-in-a-hurry" meal!

SIDES & VEGGIES

Garlic Parmesan Noodles

Serves 4-6

8 oz. dried angel hair pasta (whole-wheat or brown rice)
½ stick (¼ cup) butter
½ tsp garlic granules
¼ cup freshly shredded (or grated) Parmesan cheese
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Cook pasta according to package directions. Meanwhile, in a saucepan, melt butter over low heat. Stir in garlic granules. Add drained pasta, cheese and salt/pepper. Toss with tongs until cheese melts. Serve with additional Parmesan cheese and salt/pepper.

Mashed Potatoes

Serves 4-6

4 lbs potatoes, peeled and chopped (the smaller you chop them, the more quickly they will cook)
½ cup butter
¼ cup sour cream or plain yogurt (optional)
1 tsp sea salt
¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper
Milk (amount varies; may need up to ¼ cup - - or none at all)

Place potatoes in a large pot with enough water to cover them. Cover with a lid and bring to a boil.

Reduce heat and simmer for 15-25 minutes (depending on potato size) until potatoes are tender when pierced with a fork. Drain and return potatoes to the pot.

Mash with a potato masher or beat with an electric mixer on low speed. Add butter, sour cream or yogurt (optional), salt and pepper. If needed, gradually beat in enough milk to make the potatoes light and fluffy.

Sautéed Veggies with Fresh Garlic

Serves 4

1 TBSP oil, plus more as needed (we like coconut oil)
2 cups fresh broccoli florets, cut into bite-sized pieces
1 bell pepper (red, orange or yellow), thinly sliced
1 medium onion, thinly sliced
2 tsp freshly pressed or minced garlic
Sea salt or lemon juice, to taste

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add broccoli and peppers. Sauté about 4 minutes, stirring frequently. Add onions and a bit more oil if needed. Sauté about 4 more minutes until all veggies reach desired tenderness, stirring frequently. Add garlic and sauté 1 more minute, stirring frequently. Salt to taste (or add a squeeze of lemon juice, instead). Enjoy!

Brussels Sprouts with Butter and Garlic

Serves 4

24 brussels sprouts
6 TBSP butter
4 cloves fresh garlic, minced or pressed

Prepare sprouts for cooking:

1. Trim off about ½ the length of each stem.
2. Remove outer layers of each sprout.
3. Cut each sprout in half length-wise.
4. Cut a slit in each stem, so it will become tender more easily when cooked.

Heat butter in a large skillet (one that has a lid) over medium heat.

Add garlic and cook until brown (about 1 minute), stirring constantly to avoid burning.

Place brussels sprouts in the pan, cut side down in the butter. Cover and cook on low heat for 20 minutes, until tender.

Pepper Jack Mashed Potatoes

Serves 4-6

4 lbs (about 8-10 small) potatoes, peeled and diced
1 medium onion, diced
1 cup sour cream
2 cups freshly shredded Pepper Jack cheese
½ tsp sea salt
¼ to ½ tsp ground cayenne pepper (optional)

Place diced potatoes and onions in a large pot and cover with water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer about 15 minutes, until tender. Drain and return to pan. Mash the potatoes. Add sour cream, cheese, salt and pepper; and stir until cheese is melted. (Note - The onions make these mashed potatoes a bit “lumpy,” but that’s okay.)

Braised Cabbage

Serves 2

1 medium green cabbage, sliced (about 4 cups)
¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
½ tsp sea salt

Preheat oven to 425°F. Scatter the cabbage in a large ungreased casserole pan. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with salt. Toss with hands until well-coated. Cover with foil and bake for about 20-25 minutes, until tender. Remove foil and stir. Continue baking uncovered until pieces of the cabbage begin to lightly brown (about 5 more minutes).

Note – This will cook down to about 2 cups of cabbage.

Baked Potatoes

1 medium Idaho potato (per person)

Preheat oven according to desired cooking time below. Scrub potatoes and prick each one several times with a fork (unless you enjoy exploding taters in your oven!). Place potatoes directly on the oven rack and bake:

400°F – 45 minutes
350°F – 60 minutes
325°F – 90 minutes

Check for doneness/tenderness by piercing with a fork, as cooking times will vary slightly depending on potato size.

Lemon Garlic Baby Potatoes

Serves 4

1 ½ lbs baby potatoes (we like *Baby Dutch Yellow* variety - or substitute red potatoes instead), cut into chunks with skin on
½ cup butter, melted
2 tsp freshly minced garlic
1 tsp sea salt
Juice of 1 lemon - This makes the dish quite “tangy,” so reduce the amount if you prefer.
1 tsp dried oregano
1 TBSP freshly shredded Parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 350°F. Place potatoes in an 8”x 8” baking dish. In a small bowl, combine melted butter, garlic, sea salt and lemon juice. Pour mixture over potatoes and stir to coat. Sprinkle oregano over potatoes. Cover with foil and bake for 30 minutes. Uncover and bake an additional 10 minutes. Sprinkle with cheese and return to oven until cheese is just melted.

Sautéed Garlic Greens

Serves 2

1 bunch Swiss chard, leaves only
1 large garlic clove, minced
½ TBSP extra virgin olive oil
Sea salt/pepper, to taste
Freshly grated Parmesan cheese (optional)

Tear Swiss chard leaves from thick stalks and coarsely chop the leaves. Heat oil in a medium skillet over moderate heat until hot but not smoking. Cook garlic for just 30 seconds, stirring constantly. Add leaves, tossing to coat with oil. Cook until leaves are wilted and tender. Season with salt and pepper. Sprinkle with cheese (optional).

Chipotle Sweet Potatoes

Serves 2

1 large sweet potato (about 20 oz.)
1 – 1 ½ TBSP cooking oil (we like coconut oil)
Sea salt, to taste
¼ tsp chipotle powder, to taste

Peel and dice potato. Heat oil in large skillet over medium-high heat. Add diced potatoes and toss to coat in oil. Cook uncovered until desired tenderness is reached, stirring frequently (about 8 minutes). Sprinkle with salt and chipotle powder, to taste.

Skillet Taters

Serves 2-4

1 lb potatoes (red or Yukon Gold), skin on
1 TBSP oil (we like coconut oil)
½ TBSP dried oregano
¼ tsp paprika
¼ tsp sea salt
¼ cup freshly shredded or grated Parmesan cheese

Cut potatoes into thick slices and place in saucepan. Cover with water and boil 10-12 minutes until tender, but firm. Remove from heat and drain. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high to high heat. Add drained potatoes and toss to coat in oil. Allow potatoes to "brown" by cooking them in a single layer and not stirring too frequently. It's best to just brown them on one side, then flip ONCE and allow them to brown on the other side. When potatoes are done, add seasonings and toss to coat. Sprinkle with cheese; remove from heat once cheese melts. Serve with chicken or burgers!

Crispy Baked Fries

Serves 2-3

The KEY to making CRISPY fries in the oven is...preheating the COOKIE SHEET!!! Do *not* underestimate the importance of this step or your fries will be *soggy*!

2 large baking potatoes or sweet potatoes, skin on
2 TBSP olive oil or grapeseed oil
Garlic granules, to taste (optional)
Sea salt and pepper, to taste

Preheat oven (and cookie sheet!) to 450°F. Scrub potatoes and chop into thin strips or thin rounds. (You can peel the potatoes first if you prefer.) Place sliced potatoes into a large re-sealable bag and pour oil into bag. Seal bag and shake until well-coated.

Once oven is preheated, remove cookie sheet and dump fries onto sheet (this might smoke a bit from the oil, but it's fine). You may season the fries now or wait until they are done cooking.

Spread fries into a single layer and bake for 20 minutes. Flip fries and bake for additional 5-15 minutes (depending on size) until other side reaches desired brownness. Season if you haven't already.

Tip: Sweet potatoes add a lot of wonderful sweet flavor, so try them at least once!!

Cheesy Potatoes

Serves 10

7 cups red potatoes, chopped into bite-sized pieces (skin on)
1 cup chopped onion
8 oz. sour cream
2 cups freshly shredded cheese of your choice (we like Pepper Jack)
½ tsp sea salt
¼ to ½ tsp ground cayenne pepper (optional)
2 medium tomatoes, seeded and chopped

Preheat oven to 350°F. Place potatoes and onions in a large pot, and add enough water just to cover them. Bring to a boil and cook 12 to 15 minutes or until tender; drain. Return potatoes to the pot; stir in sour cream, cheese, salt, and cayenne (optional). Stir in chopped tomatoes. Spoon mixture into a greased 2-quart rectangular baking dish. Bake, uncovered, about 30 minutes or until heated through.

Sautéed Squash

Serves 2

1 small zucchini or yellow summer squash (about ¾ lb), sliced with skin on
2 TBSP butter or olive/grapeseed oil (enough to liberally coat the bottom of the pan)
Sea salt and pepper, to taste

Heat oil or butter in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add a single layer of squash, reserving the rest to cook in batches. Sauté squash until translucent and beginning to brown on the bottom. Flip and continue cooking until second side is browned. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Sauté additional batches, as needed. Drain on paper towels if necessary.

Grilled Asparagus

4 servings

1 bunch asparagus
1-2 TBSP olive oil
Sea salt and pepper, to taste

Preheat grill to medium heat. Snap tough bottom end off of each spear. Toss spears in olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Place on grill (careful not to let them fall through the grates!). Cook for a couple of minutes per side, until desired firmness is reached.

SOUPS

Southwestern Soup

Serves 4-6

1 TBSP oil (we like olive oil or coconut oil)
1 onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 jalapeno, seeded and minced
1 TBSP chili powder (p. 51)
1 tsp ground cumin
2 cups frozen corn
2 tomatoes, diced
4 cups prepared black beans (two 15-oz. cans; drained and rinsed)
4 cups chicken (p. 33) or vegetable (p. 91) broth
Sea salt and black pepper, to taste

Heat oil in a stock pot over medium-high heat. Sauté onion, garlic and jalapeno for about 5 minutes, until tender. Add remaining ingredients and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer at least 30 minutes.

Chicken & Rice Soup

Serves 8-10

10 cups homemade chicken broth (p. 33), divided
1 cup brown rice, uncooked
2-3 cups of diced, cooked chicken (leftover is great!)
1 cup diced carrots
1 cup diced celery
1 medium onion, finely diced (about ½ cup)

Cook the rice according to package directions, using 2 cups chicken broth instead of the cooking water.

Meanwhile, boil veggies in the other 8 cups of broth until tender - about 20 minutes. Add cooked chicken to the broth. Add cooked rice, and serve. This makes a TON of soup, but it freezes well for later use!

Cheesy Potato Soup

Serves 6

4 cups diced potatoes (we use red, unpeeled potatoes)
1 medium onion, finely diced
½ -1 cup diced carrots
½ cup diced celery
3 cups chicken (p. 33) or vegetable (p. 91) broth
½ cup butter
½ cup unbleached white flour
2 cups milk
16 oz. mild cheddar cheese, shredded
½ tsp sea salt, to taste

In a large pot, add potatoes, onion, carrots and celery. Add broth. If it's not enough to *just* cover the veggies, add a bit more broth. (It's okay if veggies are sticking out of the liquid a bit). Boil on high until veggies are tender, stirring occasionally - about 15 minutes.

While veggies are boiling, melt butter in a saucepan. On medium-high heat, add flour. "Bubble" the flour in the butter for a few minutes, whisking constantly - - keep the heat low enough that you don't scorch the mixture!

Slowly add milk to the butter and flour. Allow to thicken, then add ⅓ of the cheese and stir until melted. Continue adding cheese in this fashion until it's all melted. Don't worry if the mixture is VERY thick at this point, and do *not* add more liquid at *this* point.

Once veggies are tender, add cheese sauce to the large pot of veggies. Stir. Now, add more broth or milk if the soup is too thick. Add salt, to taste, and black pepper if you'd like.

This is a VERY filling soup! Enjoy!

This soup freezes very well. If you make more than you need, you'll have it on hand when you're in a "pinch" or don't feel like cooking dinner another night!

Chicken Noodle Soup

Serves 8-10

12-15 cups homemade chicken broth (p. 33)

2-3 carrots, diced

2-3 stalks of celery, diced

12 oz. dried pasta (rotini works well), optional - Just add extra veggies, instead, and make "Chicken & Vegetable" soup if you prefer.

Leftover chicken meat (We usually save the breast pieces from our roasted chicken and tear into little pieces...you could use dark meat, instead, or a combination!)

Cook pasta according to package directions. Drain and set aside. (It's important to cook the noodles *separately*, rather than cooking them in the broth, because they'll absorb *all* of your yummy broth!) Boil carrots and celery in broth until tender. Add chicken and noodles and enjoy!

NOTE: Play around and add whatever veggies you like or have on hand!

Chili

Serves 8-10

2 TBSP olive oil

2 large onions, finely diced

1 green pepper, finely diced

½ cup chopped fresh jalapeno (optional)

1 lb lean ground beef

5 cloves garlic, pressed

1 (14.5 oz.) can diced tomatoes, undrained

2 (25-oz.) cans kidney beans, undrained*

32 oz. tomato juice

1 TBSP chili powder, to taste (p. 51)

Sea salt, pepper and garlic granules, to taste

Heat olive oil in a large stock pot over high heat. Add diced onions, green peppers and jalapeno. Cook until softened. Add ground beef and cook until browned. Add garlic and cook 1 more minute. Season to taste with garlic granules, salt and pepper. Add remaining ingredients and simmer at least one hour. Freezes well!

*Chili tastes great with *just* beans if you don't eat meat (or you just want to save money). Chili also tastes great with no beans and *just* meat if, perhaps, you don't like beans or have trouble digesting them. ☺

Broccoli Cheddar Soup

Serves 2-4

1 TBSP butter

1 medium onion

½ lb broccoli florets

½ cup carrot slices

2 cups homemade chicken broth (p. 33)

¼ cup butter (4 TBSP)

¼ cup unbleached white flour

2 cups milk

8 oz. freshly shredded cheddar cheese

Finely dice onion, broccoli and carrots with a food chopper or processor (to the size of pieces you'd like in the finished soup).

Melt 1 TBSP butter in a large pot. Add onion and sauté until tender. Add broccoli, carrots and broth. (Broth may not *completely* cover the veggies. This is fine...do NOT add extra broth!) Boil until all veggies are tender, about 10-15 minutes.

Meanwhile, melt 4 TBSP butter in a separate sauce pan. Over medium heat, add flour and whisk until bubbly. Continue cooking 3-5 minutes...with high enough heat that it continues to "bubble" but not burn.

Add milk a little at a time. The mixture will turn "pasty" at first, and this is a *good* thing. Continue cooking until warmed completely through and thickened. If it's not thick, it will thicken upon standing, so don't worry.

Once veggies are tender, add the butter/flour/milk mixture to the veggies and stir. Soup may seem a bit "thin" at this point, but it will thicken when cheese is added. Add cheese and stir over low heat until melted. Season with salt and pepper. This recipe freezes and re-heats well.

Crock Pot Chicken Broth

Makes 8-12 cups

This broth is yummy enough to drink on its own!! Mmm...!

NOTE: You will need a *large* crock pot and a *very* finely-meshed strainer for this recipe.

1 whole raw chicken
Chicken neck, if available
2-3 carrots (unpeeled is fine), cut into large chunks
Tops from 1 bunch of celery (or 3 celery stalks), chopped
1-2 onions, unpeeled and cut in half
1 head of garlic, unpeeled; cut in half width-wise so all cloves are exposed
2 TBSP apple cider vinegar (optional)
3 TBSP dried Italian Seasoning (we use *Frontier* brand)*
1 heaping TBSP sea salt
½ TBSP freshly ground pepper or whole peppercorns
Water (about 3 quarts)

Remove any organs/innards from chicken cavity (sometimes there aren't any). Rinse chicken inside and out.

Place chicken and all other ingredients in large crock pot. Add water last, filling crock pot to the top rim. Cover and cook on low for 8-12 hours or on high for 4-6 hours.

Remove meat and use for whatever you'd like (or save for chicken noodle soup). I usually place my strainer over a large stock pot and then spoon the rest of the crock pot contents into it. Then I use a spoon to smash the strainer contents a few times to squeeze out every bit of juice into my stock pot. Discard cooked veggies, and chicken skin and carcass.

Allow broth to cool at room temperature for a bit. Then cover broth and place in fridge overnight (or pour into smaller containers and then put in the fridge), so the fat will harden on the top.

The next day, remove the layer of fat (and discard), and use the broth as you'd like or freeze it for later use. I recommend freezing it in small portions.

Note - All seasonings, veggies and amounts of everything for this recipe are *very* flexible. You can't really mess this up. Substitute as you please!!

**If you don't have an Italian Seasoning blend available, just substitute: 1 TBSP dried oregano + 1 TBSP dried thyme + 1 TBSP dried basil.*

Condensed Cream of Celery* Soup

Makes 4 cups (1 cup = 1 can of store-bought soup)

This is a *condensed* soup, intended as a substitution in recipes that call for canned *condensed* cream of celery soup. If you'd like to eat it as a *soup*, dilute this recipe with an equal amount of milk or water!

½ cup (1 stick) butter
1 cup finely diced celery*
1 cup unbleached white flour
2 cups chicken (p. 33) or vegetable (p. 91) broth
2 cups milk
2 tsp sea salt
1 tsp freshly ground black pepper

In a medium saucepan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add diced celery and sauté until tender (about 15 minutes), stirring occasionally.

Add flour, ¼ cup at a time, stirring until combined. Mixture will have a consistency similar to cookie dough after all of the flour is added.

Add broth. Turn heat to high and bring to a boil, whisking constantly until it thickens to a "gravy-like" consistency.

Add milk, salt and pepper. Continue whisking over high heat until "cake batter" consistency is reached (this may take up to 5 more minutes).

Use 1 cup of this soup as a substitute for 1 store-bought can of *condensed* soup. This soup freezes very well, too, so save time by making more than you need and freezing it in labeled plastic bags or containers in smaller portions for later use.

*This recipe is for cream of celery soup, but you can make condensed cream of mushroom, chicken, potato, etc. by substituting the 1 cup of celery with 1 cup of whatever ingredient you prefer. Just dice the selected ingredient, and sauté it until it is tender. Then follow the instructions here.

Creamy Roasted Tomato Soup

Serves 8

6 cups (3 pints) cherry tomatoes
2 TBSP olive oil
1 tsp sea salt
½ tsp ground black pepper
2 TBSP butter or olive oil
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 small onion, chopped
4 medium tomatoes, chopped
4 cups chicken (p. 33) or vegetable (p. 91) broth; or water
½ tsp fresh thyme, chopped (or ¼ tsp dried thyme)
1 cup cream (optional)

Heat oven to 400°F. Line a large, rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper (for easy clean up). Combine the cherry tomatoes, 2 TBSP olive oil, and salt and pepper on the baking sheet and toss to coat evenly. Spread them in a single layer. Roast the tomatoes until they are shriveled with brown spots, about 35 to 45 minutes.

In a large pot, heat 2 TBSP butter or oil over medium-high heat. Add the garlic and onion and sauté until softened, about 6 minutes. Add the chopped tomatoes, broth (or water) and thyme. Bring the mixture to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, partially covered, for 40 minutes. When they are done roasting, add the roasted tomatoes to the pot.

Using a food processor, blender or immersion blender, puree the soup until smooth. Return it to the pot and stir in the cream (optional). Add salt and pepper, to taste.

Tomato-Basil Lentil Soup

Serves 6-8

½ lb dry brown lentils
½ TBSP olive oil
½ tsp dried oregano
1 small onion, diced
1 garlic clove, minced
8-oz. can diced tomatoes
8-oz. can tomato sauce
2 cups vegetable broth
4 cups water
Thinly sliced fresh basil, to taste

Soak lentils in water for 1 hour; drain. In a medium saucepan, heat oil, oregano, onion and garlic over medium heat; simmer 5 minutes. Add tomatoes, tomato sauce, broth and water; boil for a few minutes. Add lentils and cook uncovered over medium heat for 1 hour. Season with sea salt, black pepper and garlic granules. Garnish with fresh basil.

Lamb Stew (crock pot)

Serves 8-10

1 lb fresh green beans, ends removed
4 cups water
½ tsp sea salt

1 lb ground lamb
2 large garlic cloves, minced
Sea salt/pepper, to taste

1 lb green cabbage, chopped into 1-inch pieces (about 4 cups)
1 green pepper, sliced
1 red pepper, sliced
1 medium onion, sliced
Two 46-oz. containers tomato juice
1 tsp garlic granules, to taste
1 tsp sea salt, to taste
½ tsp freshly ground black pepper

Soak green beans in 4 cups water and ½ tsp salt for 3-12 hours. In a skillet over high heat, brown lamb with garlic. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Transfer to crock pot. Add all other ingredients and stir to combine. Cover and cook on low for about 10 hours until all veggies are tender. Serve over rice or just enjoy as a stew! Freezes well.

Chicken Tortilla Soup

Serves 8-10

2 tsp olive oil
1 medium onion, diced
4 garlic cloves, minced
1 medium jalapeno pepper, diced
½ medium green pepper, diced
4 small boneless, skinless chicken breasts, raw
4 cups frozen corn
2 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp chili powder (p. 51)
¼ tsp ground cayenne pepper (optional)
7 cups homemade chicken broth (p. 33)
6 Roma tomatoes, diced
2 (6 oz.) cans tomato paste + 4 (6 oz.) cans water
Sea salt, to taste
Corn chips (optional; for topping) (p. 43 & p. 65)

Sauté onion, garlic, jalapeno and green pepper with olive oil in a large pot over high heat until tender. Add remaining ingredients (except corn chips), and bring to a boil. After about 15 minutes, remove the chicken breasts and shred them into pieces. Return shredded chicken to the pot and simmer an additional 45 minutes. Salt to taste. Serve. Top with crushed corn chips if desired. This recipe makes a lot of soup, but it freezes well for later use.

Salads & Dressings

Italian Dressing

2 cups extra virgin olive oil
1 cup red wine vinegar or apple cider vinegar
3 tsp garlic granules
3 tsp dried oregano
4-5 TBSP raw honey, to taste
2 tsp sea salt
1 tsp freshly ground black pepper

Whisk (or shake) together and enjoy. Tastes even better as it sits, so make it a day ahead if you prefer. No need to refrigerate. Makes about 1 quart.

Garlic Dijon Vinaigrette

2 ¼ cups extra virgin olive oil
¾ cup balsamic vinegar
1 TBSP freshly pressed garlic (about 6 medium cloves)
¼ cup Dijon mustard
⅛ cup loosely packed diced fresh basil
---or substitute 1 TBSP dried basil
½ TBSP freshly ground black pepper

Whisk together or combine all ingredients in a jar or bottle with a tight-fitting lid and shake vigorously until well blended and smooth. (One-quart canning jars work well for storing dressing. We often use empty olive oil bottles, as well.) Makes 3 ¼ cups.

Cucumber & Red Onion Salad

Makes approximately 6 servings

3 TBSP extra virgin olive oil
1 ½ TBSP apple cider vinegar
1 TBSP raw honey
Sea salt and ground black pepper, to taste
3 cucumbers, thinly sliced (peeled or unpeeled)
1 small red onion, thinly sliced

In a large bowl, whisk together oil, vinegar, honey, salt and pepper until well blended. Add cucumber and onion; toss well to combine. Enjoy!

Caesar Dressing

Makes ¾ cup (enough for 2 meal-sized salads)

1 egg yolk*
½ tsp anchovy paste
1 tsp freshly pressed garlic
1 tsp Dijon mustard
2 TBSP apple cider vinegar
½ cup extra virgin olive oil
2 TBSP freshly shredded Parmesan cheese (optional)

Combine egg yolk, anchovy paste, garlic, mustard and vinegar in a blender on low until combined. With blender running, stream in olive oil through the lid opening bit by bit until it's all incorporated. Transfer to a bowl or dish and stir in cheese. Let chill about 2 hours before serving. This dressing is best eaten within 24 hours.

*Farm-fresh, pastured eggs are recommended when consuming raw (p. 67).

French/Catalina Dressing

Makes about 1 cup. If you try it and like it, save time by making a double or triple batch each time. Whisk together:

½ cup extra virgin olive oil
¼ cup apple cider vinegar
2 TBSP raw honey
2 TBSP tomato paste
1 tsp onion granules
½ tsp garlic granules
½ tsp paprika
¼ tsp dry mustard
¼ tsp chili powder (p. 51)
¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper

Raspberry Vinaigrette

1 cup fresh raspberries (or frozen raspberries, thawed)
2 TBSP apple cider vinegar
1 TBSP raw honey

Mix together in blender until smooth. Add additional vinegar if the dressing is thicker than you prefer. This is tasty over a salad of mixed greens, red onion, chopped walnuts, sliced strawberries and mandarin oranges!! It is a very tart and concentrated dressing, so you don't need to use *much*! Makes ½ cup of dressing.

Pasta Salad

Makes about 7 cups (5-7 servings)

Plan ahead so the pasta has plenty of time to cool after it cooks!

8 oz. dried rotini or elbow pasta
1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
1 cucumber, chopped (peeled or skin on)
1 yellow or orange bell pepper, diced
1 cup broccoli florets, chopped
15-oz. can garbanzo beans, rinsed and drained (optional)
¾ cup homemade Italian dressing (p. 35)

Cook pasta according to package directions. Drain and chill in fridge. Chop all veggies and mix together in a medium mixing bowl. Once noodles have cooled, add them to the veggies and toss to combine. Add dressing and toss to coat. Enjoy immediately or store in fridge for later.

Note: The olive oil in homemade dressings may solidify in the refrigerator. So if you plan to eat the salad *later*, you might want to remove the salad from the fridge 30-60 minutes before serving or wait and add the dressing immediately before serving.

Mixed Veggie Salad

These veggies are sturdy enough to hold up well together for 3-4 days in the fridge, so you can make a huge batch ahead of time and take it for lunch each day!

Cauliflower, chopped
Broccoli, chopped
Green bell pepper, chopped
Red cabbage, chopped
Red onion, diced
Carrots, chopped
Celery, chopped
Cherry tomatoes, whole

Raw apple cider vinegar, to taste

Mix veggies together in a bowl. Just before serving, add apple cider vinegar. Toss to coat. You can add the vinegar ahead of time, too. We often do so the night before we plan to serve it for lunch.

Homemade Croutons

Serves 2

2 TBSP olive oil or grapeseed oil
¼ tsp garlic granules
¼ tsp sea salt
¼ tsp dried oregano
2 slices bread – homemade (p. 42) or an additive-free brand (see p. 60)

Preheat oven to 375°F. Mix oil and seasonings together in a medium bowl. Cut bread into little cubes (16-24 cubes per slice). Add bread cubes to oil mixture and toss to coat. Spread cubes onto an ungreased cookie sheet in a single layer. (Dispose of any crumbs rather than cooking them with the cubes because they will burn up and smoke and smell!) Bake on middle rack for 5 minutes. Flip croutons over and bake additional 2-5 minutes on the other side, until golden brown. Watch carefully to make sure they don't burn! Allow to cool for 10 minutes before serving or storing in a sealed container for later use.

Egg Salad

Serves 4-6

1 dozen eggs
½ cup finely diced sweet onion
⅓ cup Super Simple Mayo (p. 51)
2-3 stalks celery, diced (optional)
2-4 tsp Dijon mustard, to taste
Ground cayenne pepper or paprika, to taste (optional)
Sea salt and ground black pepper, to taste

Place eggs in a large pot (preferably in a single layer). Cover eggs with cold water. Cover pot with a lid, and bring to a rigorous boil. Remove pan from heat and let sit, covered, for 20 minutes. Transfer eggs to a bowl of ice water. Allow to cool completely, and then remove shells.

(NOTES: To verify that your eggs have finished cooking, take one *cooked* egg and one *raw* egg and spin each of them on the counter (or other hard, flat surface). The boiled egg should spin much more quickly than the raw egg! Also, the shells of very fresh eggs don't peel off very easily; so if you purchase eggs from a farm, use the *oldest* eggs you have on hand when making hard-boiled eggs.)

Prepare mayo and set aside. Dice hard-boiled eggs and place in a medium bowl. Add onion (and celery, if desired). Add mayo until desired consistency is reached (we use about ⅓ cup). Stir in Dijon mustard, to taste (we usually use 3-4 tsp). Add salt, pepper, and (optional) cayenne pepper or paprika, to taste.

Breakfast

Honey Granola Bars

Makes 16 bars. These are crunchy and delicious!

½ cup butter
¾ cup raw honey
1 tsp pure vanilla extract
¼ tsp sea salt
1 tsp ground cinnamon
⅛ tsp ground nutmeg
4 cups quick oats
1 cup raisins (optional)*

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a 9" x 13" baking dish. Melt butter and honey on the stove in a large pot. Add vanilla, salt and spices; stir until dissolved. Remove from heat and stir in oats. Stir in raisins, if using. Spread mixture into baking dish. Press the mixture down firmly into the pan (a flipping spatula works great for this). Bake for about 20 minutes, or until golden brown.

Cool for about 30 minutes; cut into bars (but do not remove from pan, yet). Cool another 30 minutes and enjoy! Store in an air-tight container at room temperature. These freeze really well and can even be eaten when fully frozen because they retain the same exact texture while frozen – no need to thaw! Make these in bulk and freeze for added convenience!

*If you'd like some bars *with* raisins and some bars *without* them; then *before* adding the raisins to the batter, transfer half of the batter to one side of the baking dish. Then, add ½ cup raisins to the remaining batter, stir, and transfer it to the other half of the baking dish.

Berry yogurt (with honey)

Serves 1

¼ cup frozen berries (measured while frozen)
1 tsp raw honey, to taste
½ cup plain yogurt

Allow berries to thaw to room temperature. Add honey and mix well in a blender. Stir berry mixture into yogurt, and serve. For added convenience, make a larger batch and store it in the fridge for up to a week!

Cinnamon-Raisin Oatmeal

Serves 1

½ cup oats (old fashioned, quick or steel-cut variety)
Water (amount indicated on oats package)
½ tsp ground cinnamon, to taste
1 TBSP raw honey, to taste
Raisins

Cook oats according to package directions. Stir in honey and cinnamon. Sprinkle in some raisins. Enjoy!

Hash Brown Potatoes

Serves 2

1 large leftover baked potato (fully cooked, but cooled overnight in the fridge)
1 to 2 TBSP coconut oil (or butter)
Sea salt, to taste

Shred the potato using a cheese grater. Meanwhile, heat oil or butter in a skillet over medium-high heat. Add shredded taters and toss to coat. Spread taters into a single layer and cook *undisturbed* until the bottom side is browned. Flip potatoes and cook *undisturbed* until the other side reaches desired doneness/brownness. Sea salt, to taste, and serve.

Coconut Bread

Makes 1 loaf

6 eggs
½ cup butter, melted
2 TBSP raw honey
½ tsp sea salt
1 tsp aluminum-free baking powder
¾ cup coconut flour

Preheat oven to 350°F. Whisk eggs in a mixing bowl. Add melted butter, honey, salt and baking powder; whisk until well combined. Add flour and stir or whisk until all lumps are gone. Batter will be *very* thick! Grease a loaf pan with butter or coconut oil and spread batter into pan. Bake for 40 minutes. Cool completely. We like to refrigerate this bread and snack on it after it's nice and cool because then it tastes much *sweeter*...almost like pound cake!

Hearty Pancakes (with optional blueberries)

Yields about 8 pancakes

¾ cup whole-wheat flour
½ cup unbleached white flour (or use *all* whole-wheat or *all* white flour if you prefer)
2 tsp aluminum-free baking powder
1 egg
1 cup milk
½ tsp sea salt
2 TBSP raw honey
½ cup frozen blueberries (optional)

In a medium bowl, stir together flours and baking powder with a wire whisk and set aside.

In a separate bowl, stir together the egg, milk, salt and honey. Stir in flour until just moistened; add blueberries (if using), and stir to incorporate. Batter will be lumpy.

Preheat a skillet over medium heat, and coat with butter or oil. Pour approximately ¼ cup of batter into the pan for each pancake. Cook until bubbles appear, about 90 seconds. (Sometimes they don't "bubble," so just peek frequently at the bottom of the pancake and flip when it's brown enough for you.) Flip, and continue cooking until golden brown, about 60 more seconds. These freeze well for later use, too!

Lamb & Eggs

Serves 4

½ lb ground lamb
½ green bell pepper, diced
1 small onion, diced
6 eggs, beaten
Sea salt and pepper, to taste

In a skillet over medium-high heat, brown lamb with pepper and onion until meat is cooked through and veggies are tender. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Stir in eggs and scramble until eggs are done. Enjoy! (This dish is also great for dinner! And, if you've never eaten lamb, you should *definitely* try it! Don't expect this dish to taste like ground beef with eggs in it! Lamb has a *unique* flavor!)

Tater & Egg Skillet

Makes 4 servings

½ TBSP oil (we like coconut oil)
4 small red potatoes, washed and diced (skin on);
or 1 Russet potato, peeled and diced
1 small yellow onion, diced
1 small bell pepper (any color), diced
6 eggs, beaten
1 Roma tomato, seeded and diced (optional)
1 to 1 ½ cups shredded cheese (we like Pepper Jack)
Sea salt and pepper, to taste

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add potatoes, onions and bell pepper and sauté until desired tenderness. Add eggs and stir. Continue cooking until eggs are done, stirring occasionally. Season to taste with sea salt and black pepper. Toss in diced tomatoes (if using) and stir again. Sprinkle cheese on top, cover and remove from heat. Serve once cheese has melted. This makes a great dinner entrée, too!

Fried Egg

1 tsp oil or butter (we prefer coconut oil)
1 egg
Sea salt and pepper, to taste

Heat oil in a skillet over medium-high heat. Don't add the egg until the pan is fully heated. Crack egg into pan. Add egg slowly so it doesn't spread out too far. Use the shell or a spatula to flatten/spread the yolk. Cook for about 1 minute. Flip egg and cook about 1 more minute. Season to taste with sea salt and pepper.

Spinach & Eggs

Serves 2-3

½ TBSP butter or oil
1 small red bell pepper, diced
1 medium onion, diced
6 eggs, whisked
Large handful fresh baby spinach, finely chopped
Sea salt and pepper, to taste

Heat a large skillet over medium-high to high heat. Melt butter or oil in the pan. Add pepper and onion, and sauté until tender. Add eggs and scramble until desired doneness. Toss in spinach and cook just until wilted. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Whole-Wheat Blueberry Muffins

Makes 12 muffins

1 ¼ cups unbleached white flour
¾ cup whole-wheat flour
(or 2 full cups white flour only for lighter texture!)
1 tsp sea salt
1 TBSP aluminum-free baking powder
½ cup butter
½ cup raw honey
1 cup milk or water
1 medium egg
1 ½ cups fresh or frozen blueberries

Preheat oven to 400°F.

Mix flour with salt and baking powder. (A wire whisk works well for this. Use a sifter if you have one.) Melt butter and honey together on the stove in a medium saucepan. Remove from heat and add egg and milk or water; stir to combine. Pour this mixture into the flour mixture and stir together with a spoon. Fold in blueberries.

Line a muffin pan with paper muffin cups, and fill each cup *completely* with batter. Bake 20-22 minutes, until risen and golden. Test whether they are done by lightly pressing one; if the top springs back, they are ready.

Transfer muffins from the pan to a cooling rack; and allow them to cool completely (about 60 minutes) before removing wrappers. Store cooled muffins in the fridge.

(These muffins taste sweeter when eaten *cold*, but you can eat them warm and spread with butter, too!) These muffins also freeze well, so bake in bulk and store extras for later!

Whole-Wheat Banana Bread

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a Bundt pan or a mini loaves pan. Tip - Use the inside of the butter stick wrapper to grease the pan. It works great!

Combine with a hand mixer in a large bowl:

2 eggs
¾ cup raw honey
½ cup butter (1 stick), softened
2 or 3 VERY ripe bananas, smashed (enough to yield about 1 ¼ cups).
1 tsp pure vanilla extract

Then mix in:

¼ tsp sea salt
½ tsp aluminum-free baking powder
½ tsp aluminum-free baking soda

Then mix in:

2 cups 100% whole-wheat flour

Mix well. Batter will be lumpy due to small chunks of banana and, possibly, some chunks of butter. That's fine.

If using a Bundt pan, bake 40-45 minutes, until toothpick comes out clean in the middle of the loaf. If using mini loaves pan, cut time back to 37 minutes. Ovens vary, so keep checking with a toothpick.

Quinoa Porridge

Serves 1

A warm & hearty cinnamon-flavored cereal!

1 cup water
½ cup dry quinoa
¼ cup cream or milk (or water)
1 tsp ground cinnamon, to taste (optional)
1 TBSP raw honey, to taste

Rinse quinoa in a fine mesh strainer if the package directions instruct you to do so. Bring water and quinoa to a boil over high heat. Boil for 5 minutes. Cover and remove from heat. Let sit about 10 minutes until all of the water is absorbed. Uncover and return to low heat. Add remaining ingredients, to taste. Remove from heat and enjoy! You may wish to add raisins, banana slices, etc.

Smoothies & Drinks

Raspberry-Pineapple-Spinach Smoothie

Serves 1

Don't let the spinach fool you...this smoothie is *delicious*, as well as nutritious!

Mix the following ingredients together in a blender (all measurements are approximate):

½ cup fresh baby spinach, tightly packed
½ cup frozen raspberries
½ cup fresh pineapple chunks
1 TBSP raw honey
Water (about 1 cup), to desired consistency

For a richer texture, try using milk instead of the water. Smoothies are one of the most flexible recipes you can make. You can also use juice for your liquid. Smoothies are a great place to hide veggies from your kids (or other "uncooperative" family members). Throw in whatever you have around. The sky is the limit!

"Blueberry Muffin" Smoothie

Serves 1

1 frozen banana, sliced
⅔ cup frozen blueberries
12 unsalted almonds
2 dashes ground cinnamon
2 dashes ground cardamom
1 cup milk

Mix ingredients together in a blender until smooth. This smoothie is thick and spoon-able. For a thinner consistency, add more milk.

Raspberry-Yogurt Smoothie

Makes 1 large serving

1 cup frozen raspberries
2 eggs* (or use just 1 egg for a *thicker* drink)
½ cup plain yogurt (unflavored and unsweetened)
1 TBSP raw honey, to taste

Place all ingredients into a blender and mix until smooth. This recipe is *very* flexible, so if you have more or less of an ingredient, it really doesn't matter...you can even choose different fruit altogether! If you don't use the eggs, you may need to add some milk, water or extra yogurt to make up for the missing liquid. If you don't have yogurt, you can substitute milk; but the smoothie won't be as thick.

This smoothie is great for breakfast or as a nice filling snack or in place of lunch or dinner if you're in a hurry!

*Farm-fresh, pastured eggs are recommended when consuming raw eggs (p. 67).

"Better-than-Candy" Smoothie

Serves 1

6 medium frozen strawberries (approx.)
12 chunks fresh pineapple (approx.)
½ banana
¼ cup orange juice (preferably freshly-squeezed)
¼ cup water, to desired consistency

Mix all ingredients together in a blender until smooth. This is a *very* flexible recipe, so if you have more or less of an ingredient, it really doesn't matter. You can even choose different fruits altogether!

Dairy-Free Raspberry Smoothie

Serves 1

Avocado is a great substitute for dairy in smoothies because it provides a “creamy” texture! Mix ingredients below in a blender until smooth. Enjoy!

1 ¼ cups frozen raspberries
¼ of an avocado
2 eggs*
1 TBSP raw honey

*It's best to purchase fresh, pastured eggs directly from the farm, especially when consuming raw eggs (p. 67)!

Chocolate Banana Smoothie

Serves 1

1 cup milk
1 banana, sliced
2 TBSP homemade chocolate syrup (see recipe in right column)
3 ice cubes

Mix all ingredients together in a blender until smooth.

Chocolate Protein Shake

Serves 1

1 ¼ cups milk
2 eggs*
2 TBSP raw honey, to taste
1 TBSP unsweetened cocoa powder

Mix all ingredients together in a blender until smooth. Serve immediately or cover and save for later. Note - You'll need to shake it well right before drinking it if you don't serve it immediately.

*It's best to purchase fresh, pastured eggs directly from the farm, especially when consuming raw eggs (p. 67)!

Chocolate Syrup

This syrup works great for topping ice cream or making chocolate milk or hot cocoa!

Sugar version

½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1 cup sugar
1 cup water
1 tsp pure vanilla extract

Raw honey version

½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1 cup raw honey
¼ cup water
1 tsp pure vanilla extract

In a sauce pan, mix together cocoa powder, sugar (or honey) and water. If using sugar, bring to a boil and cook until all of the cocoa powder and sugar is fully dissolved. If using honey, warm over low heat until honey is melted and cocoa powder fully dissolves. Remove from heat and stir in vanilla extract. Cool completely before using with cold dishes (e.g., ice cream). Store in an air-tight container.

Chocolate Milk

Serves 1

1 cup milk
1 ½ - 2 TBSP homemade chocolate syrup (recipe above)

Stir ingredients together with a spoon, and enjoy! This drink stores well in the fridge for several days, so feel free to make a large batch. Then shake well or stir before serving.

Hot Cocoa

Serves 1

Warm the chocolate milk recipe (above) on the stove over very low heat until warmed through.

Optional add-ins:

1. Sprinkle in some ground cinnamon for a more interesting flavor or toss a whole cinnamon stick into the pan while warming the milk!
2. Add a pinch of ground cayenne pepper for a little spiciness!

Fresh Lemonade (with raw honey)

Serves 4

¾ cup raw honey
1 cup lemon juice (preferably freshly-squeezed)
6 cups water or carbonated water
Ice cubes (optional)

Mix honey with lemon juice until the honey dissolves - just whisk together in a pitcher or shake together in a jar or other tightly-sealed container. (We just use a half-gallon glass jar.) Add the water, and stir or shake to combine. Refrigerate until cold or serve immediately over ice!

Strawberry-Mint Yogurt Smoothie

Serves 1

½ cup yogurt (plain & unsweetened)
½ cup milk
1 cup chopped frozen strawberries
3 TBSP raw honey
½ tsp diced fresh mint leaves
¼ tsp pure vanilla extract

Mix all ingredients in a blender until smooth.

Baked Goods, Snacks & Desserts

Yeast-Free Wheat Bread

Makes 1 loaf

Preheat oven to 375°F. Grease and flour a 5"x 9" bread pan.

Mix together in a medium bowl:

3 cups whole-wheat flour
1 TBSP aluminum-free baking powder
½ tsp sea salt

Then add:

2 ½ cups water
1 TBSP extra virgin olive oil

Stir to combine. Transfer to pan and bake 60 minutes. Let cool. Then place bread in refrigerator (no need to remove from pan). Once the bread is completely chilled, it's easier to slice. Store in fridge or freezer because it will spoil easily at room temperature. Because of the moistness of this bread, it is best used for toast so it dries out a bit. This is definitely *not* sandwich bread! Try it toasted and dipped in a mixture of freshly pressed garlic, fresh diced basil and olive oil. Yum! Or toast it and spread with butter or nut butter!

"No-Bake" Oat Bars

Makes about 12 bars

This is a flourless, sugarless version of "cookie dough" that you just freeze and enjoy. No baking required!

½ cup raw honey
½ cup butter, softened
1 egg* (or ⅛ cup water)
1 tsp pure vanilla extract
1 tsp ground cinnamon
⅛ tsp ground nutmeg
3 ¼ cups quick oats

Beat together all ingredients, except oats, with a mixer or hand mixer. Add oats and stir to combine. Press batter into an ungreased 9" x 11" cake pan. Cover and freeze until solid. Cut into bars and enjoy! (Alternatively, you can shape the dough into balls or cookie shapes and store covered on a plate in the freezer until firm.)

**It's best to use farm-fresh, pastured eggs when consuming raw eggs (p. 67)!*

Homemade Bread Crumbs

Bread – enough pieces to cover a large baking sheet
(Use the bread recipe on the previous page
or a bread of your choice.)

Preheat oven to 300°F.

Arrange very thin slices of bread in a single layer on a cookie sheet. Cook about 8 minutes. Flip and cook about another 8 minutes or until dry. Drying times may vary. Let cool.

Place dried bread in a food processor or blender (dividing into several batches, if necessary, depending on how much bread you have). It takes a bit of blending, and it may initially appear as though it's not going to work, but be patient. I use a really cheap blender, and it grinds just fine! ☺ Grind until the crumbs are as finely ground as you desire.

I recommend making a HUGE batch and saving them in the freezer, so they'll be readily available when you need them.

This recipe is definitely worth the trouble if you've ever seen how many ingredients are on the label of some *store-bought* breadcrumbs!

Candied Nuts

2 cups raw or dry roasted (unsalted) nuts (We like pecans, peanuts & cashews. To save money, just use *only* peanuts!)

1 TBSP white sugar
½ tsp ground cinnamon
⅛ tsp allspice
⅛ tsp ground ginger
⅛ tsp ground nutmeg
⅛ tsp sea salt

2 TBSP butter
2 TBSP white sugar

Preheat oven to 300°F.

If using raw (unroasted) nuts, arrange them in a single layer on a large cookie sheet, and roast for about 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a small bowl, combine 1 TBSP sugar with the spices and set aside. Melt 2 TBSP butter in a large skillet over medium-low heat. Add 2 TBSP sugar and stir until dissolved. Toss in the roasted nuts and stir to coat evenly. Sprinkle in the spice mixture and toss to coat. Spread coated nuts onto a cookie sheet and allow to completely cool - about 30 minutes. Store in an airtight container.

Baked Corn Chips

Corn tortillas
Grapeseed oil (optional)
Sea salt, to taste

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Stack tortillas and cut them into quarters (or smaller) - optional. We prefer to bake the tortillas *whole* and then break them into smaller pieces when they finish cooking.

Optional: Brush both sides of the tortillas with grapeseed oil. This oil adds a wonderful “buttery” flavor that more closely resembles store-bought chips. ☺

Place tortillas on a large, ungreased baking sheet in a single layer and sprinkle with sea salt.

Bake 8-10 minutes or until golden brown. Watch closely because they turn from “done” to “burnt” fairly quickly!

For maximum crispness – After the tortillas are cooked, turn the oven *off*, and allow them to rest in the oven with the door shut (or cracked) for an additional 10 minutes until they dry completely.

Enjoy immediately or store in an air-tight container.

*NOTE: Unless your oven has a “convection bake” feature, it's best to cook just *one* tray of chips at a time.

Sweet ‘n’ Salty Popcorn

Serves 2-4

½ cup popcorn kernels
¼ cup butter or coconut oil
2 TBSP raw honey or 3 TBSP pure maple syrup
½ tsp sea salt, to taste

Pop the popcorn in an air popper.

Meanwhile, melt honey with butter or oil on stovetop over low to medium-low heat.

Pour mixture over popcorn and toss to coat. Salt, to taste. Toss to coat evenly and enjoy! This treat is sticky and delicious!

Pumpkin Pie

Makes two 8-inch pies

Filling

2 eggs

2 cups pumpkin puree (fresh or canned)

½ cup sugar (we use "Sugar in the Raw")

½ tsp sea salt

1 tsp ground cinnamon

½ tsp ground ginger

½ tsp ground nutmeg

¼ tsp ground cloves

1 ½ cups cream

Crusts – See recipe below, and make 2 crusts!

Preheat oven to 425°F.

In a mixing bowl, beat the eggs. Add the pumpkin puree, sugar, salt and all spices. Stir well to combine. Add cream and stir gently with a *spoon* - Do *not* use a mixer for this step or you may end up with a "whipped" and fluffy pie.

Pour filling into an *uncooked* crust (see recipe below).

Bake 15 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 350°F and continue cooking 45 more minutes, until a knife inserted in the center of the pie comes out clean.

Pie Crust

Makes 1 crust

½ cup + 1 TBSP butter

1 cup unbleached white flour

¼ tsp sea salt

2 TBSP milk or cream

Melt butter and allow it to cool. Meanwhile, mix flour and salt together in a mixing bowl. Add milk to melted butter, and then pour this mixture over the flour mixture. Mix everything together gently with your fingers. Form dough into a ball, and then press it directly into a pie pan. No need to grease the pan...there's nearly a *STICK* of butter in the crust already! ☺ Follow the cooking instructions for the Pumpkin Pie recipe above.

Whipped Cream

¼ cup white sugar

2 cups whipping cream

"COLD" is the secret to making whipped cream, so place your mixing bowl and mixer beaters in the freezer to chill for a while before making this recipe. You can also put the cream in the freezer for a few minutes, but don't let it freeze!

Pour cream into the cold bowl, and beat with cold beaters until it starts to thicken. Slowly add sugar and continue beating until desired thickness is reached.

If you don't use it all right away, whipped cream stores well in the fridge for several days in a covered container.

Apple Crisp

Makes about 4 servings

Filling

3 cups (1 ½ - 2 lbs) tart apples (e.g., Granny Smith)

2 TBSP raw honey

1 TBSP water

1 tsp pure vanilla extract

¼ tsp sea salt

Topping

1 cup quick oats

½ cup (1 stick) butter, softened

2 TBSP raw honey

1 ½ tsp ground cinnamon

Preheat oven to 375°F. Lightly grease a 7 ½" x 11" casserole dish.

Peel, core and very thinly slice the apples. Stir honey and water together in a medium bowl until honey dissolves; and add vanilla extract. Stir in apples and toss until well-coated. Pour apple mixture into the casserole dish and sprinkle with the sea salt.

In a separate bowl, use your hands to mix together oats, butter, honey and cinnamon. Sprinkle this mixture on top of the apples.

Bake uncovered for 20-25 minutes. Be sure to check for doneness after 20 minutes, as ovens may vary. Remove from oven and cool for about 10 minutes. Enjoy!

Apple Crisp Pie

1 whole-wheat pie crust (recipe below)
4-5 medium baking apples (we use Granny Smith)
½ tsp sea salt
¾ cup sugar (we use turbinado, but white works fine)
⅔ cup whole-wheat flour
1 ½ tsp ground cinnamon
½ cup (1 stick) cold butter
⅓ cup finely chopped walnuts
¼ cup quick oats

Preheat oven to 350°F. Prepare crust (below). Peel, core and slice apples as thinly as you can. Fill pie shell with apples, and sprinkle sea salt on top of the slices.

Mix together sugar, flour and cinnamon in a bowl. Slice the cold butter into ¼-inch thick slices and add to flour mixture. Mash mixture together with a fork until crumbly. Add walnuts and oats to mixture and combine. Spread mixture over apples.

Tent a piece of aluminum foil loosely over the pie. Place the covered pie in the oven on a cookie sheet and bake 40 minutes. Remove foil tent and bake additional 5 minutes or until golden brown. Serve warm or cool completely. (Note - Top crust will be *crumbly*!)

Whole-Wheat Pie Crust

Makes 1 crust

1 cup whole-wheat flour
¼ tsp sea salt
⅓ cup + 1 TBSP butter
2 TBSP milk or cream

Mix flour and salt together in a bowl. Melt butter and allow it to cool. Add milk to melted butter, and then pour over flour mixture. Mix together gently with your fingers. Form into a ball, then press directly into pie pan - No need to grease the pan...there's nearly a STICK of butter in the crust already! ☺ Bake according to the "Apple Crisp Pie" directions above.

Dry Roasted Pecans

2 lbs pecans (plain/unsalted; not roasted)

Preheat oven to 350°F. Spread nuts in roughly a single layer on a large cookie sheet (areas of double layering are fine). Bake for about 11 minutes. Cooking times may vary, so watch carefully the first time until you learn how long your oven takes! Pecans turn from "perfectly roasted" to "burnt" pretty quickly.

Chocolate "Pudding" (dairy-free)

Makes 1 cup (4 small servings)

¼ cup unsweetened cocoa powder (or carob powder)
2 tsp pure vanilla extract
⅓ cup raw honey
4 TBSP water, plus extra (up to 6 TBSP total)
1 large (or 1 ½ medium), ripe avocado (about 10 oz. total)

Place ingredients in a blender in the order listed above. Blend until smooth, stopping the blender to scrape ingredients off the blender walls and down into the blades when needed. Add more water, as needed (1 TBSP at a time).

Transfer to covered container and store in fridge until cool (about 2 hours). Serve chilled. This "pudding" is very rich, so a little will go a long way. Add banana slices, almonds, or toppings of your choice if you'd like!

"Candy Shell" Ice Cream Topping

Here's a *healthier* way to enjoy the "Magic Shell" ice cream topping you may have adored as a kid!

1 TBSP unrefined coconut oil
2 TBSP unsweetened cocoa powder
1 TBSP raw honey

In a small saucepan, melt ingredients together on the stove over low heat.

Allow to cool completely. Use immediately or store in a covered container for later use. To serve, simply drizzle the mixture over very cold ice cream and wait a few seconds for it to harden into a candy "shell." You can set the drizzled ice cream in the freezer for a few seconds if the topping doesn't harden quickly enough, as well.

The "secret" ingredient here is the coconut oil because it is liquid at room temperature and solid when it's cold. Even brief contact with the cold ice cream will turn this "magical" liquid syrup into a hardened "shell"!

There's no need to refrigerate the syrup. Just store it in a covered container. If your room temperature is somewhat cool, you may need to "melt" the mixture before each use. Submerging the container in warm water should be enough heat to do the trick!

Vanilla Ice Cream

Serves 4

1 cup whole milk
1 cup cream
4 eggs*
½ cup raw honey
1 ½ TBSP pure vanilla extract
Pinch of sea salt

Mix all ingredients together in a blender. Transfer mixture to an ice cream maker and follow manufacturer's directions. (Our electric machine takes about 20 minutes.) This ice cream stores very well in the freezer in a sealed container for later use.

NOTE: If you prefer *firm* ice cream (rather than soft-serve), you may need to put your ice cream in the freezer for a few hours before serving because most ice cream machines do not freeze ice cream *completely* solid!

**It's best to use farm-fresh, pastured eggs (p. 67)!*

Chocolate Ice Cream

Serves 4

1 cup whole milk
1 cup cream
4 eggs*
6 TBSP raw honey
¼ cup unsweetened cocoa powder

Mix all ingredients in a blender. Transfer mixture to an ice cream maker and follow manufacturer's directions. Stores well in the freezer in a sealed container. (Also, see "NOTE" under the "Vanilla Ice Cream" recipe above.)

**It's best to use farm-fresh, pastured eggs (p. 67)!*

Peanut Butter Ice Cream

Serves 4-5

1 cup cream
1 cup whole milk
4 eggs*
4 TBSP raw honey
1 cup natural peanut butter

Blend first 4 ingredients in a blender. Add peanut butter and blend until smooth. Transfer to ice cream maker and follow manufacturer's directions. Stores well in the freezer in a sealed container. (Also, see "NOTE" under the "Vanilla Ice Cream" recipe above.)

**It's best to use farm-fresh, pastured eggs (p. 67)!*

Strawberry Ice Cream

Makes 6 cups

¾ cup cream
¾ cup whole milk
2 eggs*
2 ¼ cups frozen strawberries
½ cup raw honey

Mix everything together in a blender until smooth. Transfer mixture to an ice cream maker and follow the manufacturer's directions. (Our electric ice cream maker takes about 20-25 minutes.) Eat right away for soft-serve style...or freeze for a few hours before serving if you prefer a more *scoop-able* style of ice cream.

**It's best to use farm-fresh, pastured eggs when consuming raw eggs (p. 67)!*

Mint Chip Ice Cream

Serves 4

1 cup milk
1 cup cream
2 eggs*
½ tsp pure vanilla extract
½ cup raw honey
½ cup fresh mint leaves, loosely packed
½ cup cocoa nibs, coarsely ground
(grind in a coffee grinder or blender)

Place all ingredients, except cocoa nibs, in a blender. Blend until smooth. Transfer mixture to an ice cream maker, stir in cocoa nibs and follow manufacturer's instructions.

If your ice cream maker produces a softer ice cream than you prefer, simply make the ice cream ahead of time and stick it in the freezer for a few hours so it can harden to "store-bought" consistency.

NOTE: This ice cream will not be *green*! It will basically look like chocolate chip ice cream with very tiny green specks in it from the mint. ☺

**It's best to use farm-fresh, pastured eggs when consuming raw eggs (p. 67)!*

“Chocolate Chip” Ice Cream

Serves 4

1 cup cream
1 cup whole milk
4 eggs*
½ cup raw honey
½ tsp pure vanilla extract
½ cup raw cocoa nibs
(ground in a coffee grinder or blender)

Mix first 5 ingredients in a blender. Transfer mixture to an ice cream maker, and stir in cocoa nibs. Follow manufacturer’s instructions until desired consistency is reached. If your ice-cream maker makes a softer ice cream than you prefer, simply make the ice cream ahead of time and stick it in the freezer for a few hours so it can harden to “store-bought” consistency.

Store extra ice cream in the freezer in an air-tight container.

**It’s best to use farm-fresh, pastured eggs (p. 67)!*

Sugar Cookies

Makes about 20 cookies

1 ½ cups unbleached white flour
¾ tsp aluminum-free baking powder
¼ tsp sea salt
½ cup (1 stick) butter, softened
1 cup white sugar, plus extra for sprinkling
1 large egg
1 tsp pure vanilla extract

Position oven rack in the middle of the oven.

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Combine flour, baking powder and salt in a small bowl.

In a large bowl, beat together butter and sugar with a mixer until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla. Beat in flour mixture (on low) just until combined.

Drop dough by heaping tablespoon onto 2 ungreased cookie sheets. Sprinkle each cookie with extra sugar.

Bake one cookie sheet at a time! Place the cookie sheet on the middle rack, and bake 10 minutes just until the edges *begin* to brown. Transfer to a cooling rack until completely cooled.

Repeat with second sheet of cookies.

Chewy Chocolate Candy

Makes 16 bite-sized pieces. These are CHEWY and delicious!

¼ cup unrefined coconut oil
¼ cup raw honey
1 tsp pure vanilla extract (or ½ tsp pure mint extract)
Pinch of sea salt (optional)
½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder (or carob powder)
⅓ cup chopped almonds

Melt coconut oil and honey together in a saucepan over low heat. Add salt (optional) and vanilla or mint extract, and stir to combine. Add cocoa or carob powder, and stir until dissolved. (We prefer cocoa powder when using *vanilla* extract and carob powder when using *mint* extract.) The “batter” will come together into one big lump when it is done. Add chopped almonds and stir to combine.

Line a small baking dish (a bread pan is the perfect size) with parchment paper. Spread batter evenly onto paper. Cover and place in freezer until solid (about 2 hours). Transfer to cutting board and cut into bite-sized pieces. Store in the freezer in a sealed container. If you prefer a “fudge-like” consistency, store in the fridge instead.

NOTE: Coconut oil is sometimes used as a gentle laxative. Enjoy a couple pieces, but don’t gobble up the whole pan until you know how it affects you. ☺

Caramel Dip

Makes about 1 cup

¾ cup sugar
½ cup cream
3 TBSP butter
½ tsp pure vanilla extract
¼ tsp sea salt

Cook sugar in a medium saucepan over medium to medium-high heat, undisturbed, until it begins to melt (about 5 minutes). Continue cooking, stirring occasionally with a long wooden spoon, until sugar melts *completely* and becomes a dark caramel color (about 5 more minutes).

While stirring, *slowly* pour in the cream *bit by bit*. The caramel may harden and steam vigorously at this point, so be careful! Reduce heat to medium-low, stirring until caramel is *completely* dissolved again. (If your butter is *cold*, dice it into small pieces now). Remove caramel from heat and stir in butter, vanilla and salt until melted.

Cool in fridge until firm, and enjoy! This recipe is great for making dipped caramel apples, too, but let it cool a bit before dipping or it will just run right off the apples! It’s best to make sure your apples are *very cold* (and dry) before dipping them, too! Store extra dip in the fridge.

Basic White Cake

2 ¼ cups unbleached white flour
1 ⅔ cups sugar
3 ½ tsp aluminum-free baking powder
1 tsp sea salt
1 ¼ cups milk
⅔ cup butter
1 tsp pure vanilla extract
5 egg whites

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease and flour a glass 13" x 9" casserole dish. Add all ingredients, except egg whites, to a large mixing bowl. Mix on low speed for 30 seconds, scraping the bowl frequently. Turn mixer to high and beat for 2 minutes, scraping the bowl occasionally. Add egg whites and beat on high speed for 2 minutes, scraping the bowl occasionally. Pour into prepared pan. Bake 40-45 minutes, until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. While cake is warm, top with Vanilla Icing (recipe below). Allow iced cake to cool completely (about 1 hour), and enjoy!

Vanilla Icing

1 cup powdered sugar
¼ tsp pure vanilla extract
¼ cup milk, divided

Mix powdered sugar and vanilla together with a spoon. Stir in half of the milk. Then continue adding more milk, one teaspoon at a time, until desired consistency is reached. Spread on warm cake (recipe above)!

Apple Sauce

Makes 2 cups

4 cups of peeled apple slices
1 cup water
2 tsp raw honey, to taste

Place apples and water in a pan and simmer for about 20 minutes until tender and mushy. Then use a hand mixer or blender to puree apples to desired consistency, adding more water if needed. Taste the sauce and decide if honey is necessary. Add honey, if desired, and stir. Store in fridge and serve chilled. You can also sprinkle with ground cinnamon!

Whole-Wheat Fudgy Brownies

2 ¾ sticks butter
¾ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
2 cups sugar
3 eggs, beaten
1 tsp pure vanilla extract
¾ cup whole-wheat flour
1 cup coarsely chopped nuts (optional)

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a 13" x 9" glass baking pan or line the pan with parchment paper.

Heat butter in a medium saucepan over low heat until melted. Remove from heat, add cocoa powder and stir until dissolved and smooth. Stir in sugar. Stir in eggs and vanilla. Add flour and nuts (if using) and mix well. Spread into prepared pan.

Bake 30-35 minutes, until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Allow brownies to cool completely (about 2 hours). Set pan in fridge to cut down on cooling time if you prefer. Cut into squares, and enjoy! Store covered or freeze for later use!

Chocolate Peanut Butter Bars

Makes about 16 small squares.

½ cup natural peanut butter (creamy or chunky)
⅔ cup raw honey
¼ tsp pure vanilla extract
2 TBSP unsweetened cocoa powder
2 cups quick oats

Grease a small baking dish (7 ½" x 11"). Melt honey and peanut butter together in a medium saucepan over low heat. Add vanilla extract and cocoa powder and stir until smooth. Add oats and stir until combined. Transfer batter to the greased baking dish, and let it cool for a minute.

Moisten your finger tips with water and press batter evenly into pan, re-moistening your fingers as needed. Cover pan and place in freezer until firm (about 2 hours). Cut into squares and enjoy! Store in freezer to maintain firmness.

Fresh Fruit Salad

Cantaloupe, cubed
Honeydew melon, cubed
Bananas, sliced
Fresh strawberries, sliced
Kiwi, peeled and sliced
Green seedless grapes, whole
Red seedless grapes, whole
Fresh pineapple, cubed
Red apples, cubed
Green apples, cubed

Use any or all of the fruits listed above. Try to select enough of them that you'll have a nice combo of colors. I prefer to use just cantaloupe, honeydew, green and red grapes, strawberries and bananas. This salad can be made hours in advance, but don't add bananas until *just* before serving (to prevent browning)!

Coconut-Almond Fudge (or candy)

1 cup unrefined coconut oil
¼ cup natural, unsalted almond butter
¼ cup raw honey
¾ cup unsweetened cocoa powder (or carob powder)
1 TBSP pure vanilla extract

Place all ingredients in a medium saucepan and melt together over low heat, stirring occasionally.

Grease a 9" x 13" casserole dish.

Once the ingredients are melted and smooth, transfer the batter to the baking dish. Place dish in refrigerator for 20-30 minutes, until the mixture is firm like fudge. You may also freeze it if you're in a hurry or would like a harder "candy bar" consistency. Store in fridge or freezer, as coconut oil will turn liquid at warm room temperatures.

NOTES:

Coconut oil is sometimes used as a gentle laxative. Enjoy a couple pieces, but don't gobble up the whole pan until you know how it affects you. ☺

This is a pretty expensive recipe, so I recommend making a half batch the first time to make sure you enjoy the flavor - you can *definitely* taste the coconut in this recipe!

This candy is similar in sweetness to very *dark* chocolate!

Whole-Wheat Oatmeal Cookies

Makes about 3 dozen cookies

1 ½ cups butter (3 sticks), softened
¾ cup turbinado sugar (or brown sugar)
½ cup white sugar
2 eggs
1 tsp pure vanilla extract
1 ½ cups whole-wheat flour
1 tsp aluminum-free baking soda
½ tsp sea salt
1 tsp ground cinnamon
⅛ tsp ground nutmeg
3 cups quick oats or old fashioned oats
1 cup raisins (optional)

Preheat oven to 375°F.

Cream butter and sugars together until light and fluffy (a hand mixer works great for this). Beat in eggs and vanilla extract.

In a separate bowl, combine flour, baking soda, salt, cinnamon and nutmeg. Then stir this mixture into the creamed mixture. Stir in oats. Fold in raisins, if using.

Drop by rounded tablespoon onto ungreased cookie sheets (do not flatten them!) and bake 8-10 minutes, until golden brown. Cool for a minute on the cookie sheet. Then transfer cookies to wire cooling racks. Store in covered containers or freeze these for later use!

Yogurt Berry Popsicles

Makes about 4 servings

1 cup plain yogurt
1 cup milk
1 ½ cups frozen strawberries (or other berries or fruit)
½ cup raw honey
1 tsp fresh mint leaves (optional)
½ tsp pure vanilla extract (optional)

Mix ingredients in a blender until smooth. Pour into popsicle molds. Freeze 3-4 hours or until frozen solid. Run molds under hot water or let them sit in hot water until loosened. Enjoy!

This is a flexible recipe! Try it with other smoothie recipes or create one of your own! It's easy!

“Monster Pops”

Makes about 6 (4-oz.) popsicles

This recipe provides raw spinach in every bite, and you can't even taste it at ALL!

I had to tell a "white lie" to the kids the first time I made these. They assumed the popsicles were green from food coloring (as if we have *that* at our house), so I didn't bother to correct them. Of course, lies of *omission* are still guilt-inducing, so after they had eaten half of their pops and seemed to enjoy them, I broke the news that it was *spinach* that made them green!

1 cup fresh baby spinach, tightly packed
2 cups fresh pineapple chunks
2 medium ripe bananas
½ cup orange juice (preferably freshly squeezed)
-or just use water, and add some raw honey
at the end if you don't think it's sweet enough

In the order listed above, add all ingredients to a blender. Mix until smooth, stopping to scrape the walls of the blender as needed. Pour mixture into popsicle molds and freeze for at least 4 hours, until solid.

Note - If you taste the mixture before freezing it, it won't taste nearly as sweet as it will once it's frozen.

Strawberry Milkshake

Makes 2 cups

1 cup milk
1 cup frozen strawberries, chopped
3 TBSP raw honey
¼ tsp pure vanilla extract

Mix all ingredients in a blender until smooth. Enjoy!

Honey-Sweetened Carob Balls

Makes about 30 bite-sized balls

4 cups natural, unsalted almond butter
¼ cup chopped nuts (we use almonds)
1 cup dried unsweetened coconut
⅔ cup carob powder
1 ½ cups raw honey

Stir all ingredients together in a mixing bowl. Drop by heaping tablespoon onto a dish...or use your hands to roll into balls. The batter may be sticky, so it may help to wet your hands with water first. Cover and freeze at least 8 hours, until desired firmness is reached.

This recipe makes 30 balls, and we LOVE them! I recommend you make a *half* batch the first time, so you don't waste valuable ingredients if you don't love them as much as we do!

No Bake Oatmeal “Chocolate Chip” Treat

Makes about 12 servings

This is a flourless, sugarless version of “cookie dough” that you just freeze and enjoy!

In a medium bowl, beat together with a mixer:
½ cup raw honey
½ cup butter, softened
1 egg* (or ⅓ cup water)
1 tsp pure vanilla extract

Stir in:
3 ¼ cups quick oats

Mix in:
½ cup raw cocoa nibs

Cover the bowl, and store it in the freezer. Just leave the batter in the bowl and scoop out the amount you want to eat each time; or you can shape the dough into balls or cookie shapes and store those in the freezer on a covered plate; or just press the batter into an ungreased glass pan, freeze it, and then cut it into bars when it's solid.

**It's best to purchase eggs directly from the farm, especially when consuming them raw (p. 67)!*

Condiments, Sauces & Seasonings

White Sauce (Cheese Sauce)

This is a recipe for a basic sauce to use for creamed vegetables, creamed soups, casseroles or pasta dishes. Cheese or seasonings may be added to suit your needs.

Medium sauce:

2 TBSP butter
2 TBSP unbleached white flour
¼ tsp sea salt
1 cup milk

Thin sauce:

1 TBSP butter
1 TBSP unbleached white flour
¼ tsp sea salt
1 cup milk

Thick sauce:

3 TBSP butter
4 TBSP unbleached white flour
¼ tsp sea salt
1 cup milk

1 cup freshly shredded cheese of your choice (optional)

Melt butter in a saucepan over low heat. Add flour and salt, whisking constantly to prevent lumps. Increase heat to achieve a slow boil, and continue whisking while slowly adding milk. Continue whisking until sauce reaches desired thickness. Enjoy!

For *cheese sauce*, reduce heat to Low at this point. Add ½ cup of cheese to the white sauce. Stir until melted. Repeat until all cheese has been added. Remove from heat. Enjoy!

Taco Seasoning Mix

2 tsp chili powder (see recipe on this page)
1½ tsp paprika
1½ tsp ground cumin
1 tsp onion granules
3 ¼ tsp garlic granules
½ tsp sea salt

Mix together all ingredients and store in a sealed container. Equivalent to 1 package of store-bought taco seasoning. (See page 26 for Taco Meat instructions.)

Chili Powder

6 TBSP paprika	½ tsp ground cayenne
2 TBSP turmeric	½ tsp garlic granules
1 tsp ground cumin	½ tsp sea salt
1 tsp dried oregano	¼ tsp ground cloves
1 TBSP dried chili peppers	

Mix together all ingredients and store in a sealed container.

Super Simple Mayo

Makes about 1 cup

1 TBSP flax meal (p. 68)
3 TBSP water
1 TBSP apple cider vinegar
¼ tsp sea salt
½ tsp dry mustard powder
1 tsp raw honey
¾ cup grapeseed oil (p. 70)

You'll need a stick blender or immersion blender and the accompanying blending cup for this recipe.

Place all ingredients in the cup in the order listed above.

Blend until thick and smooth, lifting blender as needed to incorporate all ingredients. Don't worry if the top-most oil doesn't incorporate. Just remove the blender, and use a spoon to stir it in.

Cover and store in fridge.

NOTE:

If you prefer, you may substitute extra virgin olive oil for the grapeseed oil. Extra virgin olive oil has a much stronger flavor than grapeseed oil, however, so you'll need to significantly increase the amount of honey in your mayo to prevent it from tasting too bitter.

Black Bean Salsa

1 (15-oz.) can black beans, rinsed and drained
6 Roma tomatoes, chopped
4 green onions, thinly sliced
1 clove of fresh garlic, minced
3 TBSP fresh chopped cilantro (or 3 tsp dried cilantro)
2 ½ TBSP extra virgin olive oil
2 TBSP fresh lime juice
½ tsp ground cumin
¼ tsp sea salt
¼ tsp black pepper
1 jalapeno, finely diced (optional)

Combine all ingredients in a medium bowl. Cover and refrigerate 8 hours. Serve with corn chips. Makes 4 cups.

Simple Guacamole

1 medium ripe avocado
¼ tsp garlic granules
⅛ - ¼ tsp sea salt, to taste

Mash avocado in a bowl. Add garlic and salt. Mix well and enjoy! Serves 1-2 people as a dip. Enjoy with corn chips!

Pico de Gallo (Fresh Salsa)

Makes about 4 cups

Stir together:

4 medium tomatoes, diced
4 green onions, thinly sliced
Small bunch cilantro, chopped
Juice of ½-1 medium lime
1 jalapeno, diced (optional)

Beef Bouillon Cubes

3 cups celery, minced and tightly packed
3 cups carrots, minced and tightly packed
2 onions, minced (about 2 cups, packed)
2 TBSP sea salt
½ lb lean ground beef

Combine ingredients in a large pot without any liquid. Cook over lowest heat setting, covered, for 2 hours. Transfer to a blender and process until smooth. Pour into ice cube trays and freeze. Remove from trays, and store in freezer in sealed containers. Use cubes to enhance the flavor of gravy or soups (one cube per ½ cup water). Makes 42 cubes.

Dry Onion Soup Mix

Equivalent to one store-bought packet. Mix together the following ingredients and use immediately or store in sealed bags or containers:

3 TBSP dry onion flakes	1 ½ tsp sea salt
4 tsp onion granules	¼ tsp black pepper
½ tsp celery salt	½ tsp garlic granules

Ranch Dip or Dressing

Makes about 1 cup

½ cup Super Simple Mayo (p. 51)
½ cup sour cream
½ tsp freshly pressed garlic
1 tsp Dijon mustard
½ tsp dried dill
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Whisk all ingredients together in a medium bowl. Cover and refrigerate several hours to allow flavors to marinate. Store covered in refrigerator. To create a salad dressing consistency, add 1 part milk to 6 parts dip (about 1/6 cup of milk for this *whole* batch of dip).

Super Simple Ketchup

1 (6-oz.) can tomato paste
¾ cup water
2 TBSP apple cider vinegar
2 TBSP raw honey
½ tsp sea salt
¼ tsp onion granules
2 pinches ground allspice
2 pinches ground cloves

In a medium saucepan, stir all ingredients together with a whisk. Bring to a boil and stir. Cover and simmer on Low for about 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Let cool and store in fridge. Makes about 1 ½ cups. Freezes well.

Chipotle Ketchup

1 ½ cups ketchup (store-bought or recipe above)
½ tsp chipotle powder, to taste

Stir together and enjoy. You may want to add chipotle powder just a bit at a time and keep tasting the mixture until it's the right amount of spice for *you*!

Store in fridge for up to a month. Place in freezer for longer term storage, and defrost as needed.

ADDITIVE-FREE



Grocery Shopping Guide

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INGREDIENTS (alphabetical)

Allspice

This is a dry spice (seasoning) located in the spice/baking section of any grocery store. I have never personally seen any additives in this product. Despite the impression that you may get from its name, allspice is a *single* spice (just like “cinnamon” is a *single* spice). It is made from the dried berries of a plant known as *Pimenta dioica* – a member of the pimento family. It is not a spice *blend*, so it should not have a list of ingredients for you to search through. It should just contain “allspice,” but it never hurts to double-check the label before purchasing.

Almond Butter

This is available at most regular grocery stores in the “peanut butter” section and can be used in place of peanut butter...it’s just made from almonds instead of peanuts. In Omaha, NE, the best price I’ve seen is at Costco. If you want a “certified organic” variety, though, you may need to shop at a natural food store or in the health section of a regular grocery store. Always select brands that contain just “almonds” or “almonds and salt.”

Almonds

Select brands that contain “almonds” as the *only* ingredient. You may be surprised to learn that this can be a difficult task in some stores because so many brands contain oils and all sorts of seasonings. Salted varieties are tasty for snacking (and should contain only “almonds and salt”), but they are not always appropriate for recipes that call for *unsalted* almonds.

The *baking* aisle (rather than your grocer’s section of *snacking* nuts) is a good place to find unsalted nuts with no added ingredients at most stores. Bulk bins (often near the produce section or located within the “health section” at your regular grocery store) are also another promising place to find plain nuts, but always check the ingredients list to be certain.

In Omaha, NE, [Blue Diamond](#) brand carries a “whole natural” variety that contains *just* nuts. This brand/variety is often sold in the regular (non-baking) snack nuts section, as well – and even at many gas stations!

Aluminum-Free Baking Powder

The baking powder varieties that are most widely available usually contain aluminum (listed on the label as “sodium aluminum sulfate”). I prefer not to ingest aluminum due to suspected links between excessive aluminum exposure and a variety of ailments including kidney problems, headaches, gastrointestinal distress and Alzheimer’s disease. Again, feel free to do your own research and decide whether or not it’s of concern to *you*. You will likely need to shop at a natural food store or in a health food section or [online](#) to find an aluminum-free brand. Such brands will likely say “aluminum-free” on the front of the package, but always check the ingredients list, as well. [Bob’s Red Mill](#) is one aluminum-free brand.

Aluminum-Free Baking Soda

Most baking soda is actually aluminum-free, even if that’s not stated on the front of the package. Just read the ingredients list to be sure. “Bicarbonate of soda” should be the *only* ingredient listed.

Anchovy Paste

Look for a brand that contains only “anchovies, oil, and salt.” Avoid words like “spices” or chemical-sounding names in the ingredients list. In Omaha, NE, I’ve only found additive-free varieties (like [Crown Prince](#)) at natural food stores. You could also order it [online](#), if necessary. This paste comes in a tube and is usually located in the store near the canned fish.

Apple Cider Vinegar – (see “[Vinegar](#)” – p. 92)

Balsamic Vinegar – (see “[Vinegar](#)” – p. 92)

Beans, canned (any variety: black, pinto, garbanzo, kidney, etc.)

Look for brands containing only “beans, water and salt.” Do not buy pre-seasoned “chili” beans, etc. Sadly, brands without additives and preservatives may not be available at every store.

Another option is to save money, buy dried beans and prepare them according to the package directions. It’s most convenient to make much more than you need and then freeze them in small (can-sized) batches for future use. You will also need to prepare dried beans the day *before* you plan to eat them due to the preparation time required.

To find *canned* beans without additives, you may need to check the *organic* section of the grocery store. Not all organic brands are necessarily *additive-free*, though, so always read the ingredients list! Also, many brands carry additive-free beans in *one* variety (e.g., black beans) but not in others (e.g., garbanzo), so always double-check *each* can. Another place I often find beans without additives is in the ethnic section of my regular grocery store. Not all varieties are always available there, but I’m generally able to at least find additive-free black beans at *any* grocery store in my town.

Beef – (see “[Meat](#)” – p. 72)

Black Olives (canned)

Look for a brand containing just “olives, water, and salt.” These are often only available in natural food stores and health sections because many common brands contain additional additives (e.g., “ferrous gluconate”) for color retention. Pizza is the only recipe in this book that uses (optional) olives, so you can easily not bother with this item if you prefer.

Black Pepper

We enjoy the flavor of freshly-ground black pepper. This requires purchasing whole black peppercorns (black pepper that has *not* been ground), which are available in the salt/pepper section of any regular grocery store. You’ll also need a pepper mill or grinder to grind them in. Pepper mills are available at most department stores in the kitchen section. Often these mills are available in the spice aisle at the grocery store, as well; and sometimes they are even filled with peppercorns already! If you prefer the convenience of already ground black pepper, that’s no problem. I’ve never seen additives in black peppercorns or ground black pepper. Any brand of black pepper *should* be fine, but it never hurts to double-check the label.

Boneless, Skinless Chicken Breasts – (see “[Meat](#)” – p. 72)

Bouillon

Don’t even bother looking for store-bought bouillon! There are many brands and varieties available that boldly claim to be “MSG-free,” but *every* one I’ve ever seen (even in the health food stores) contains ingredients that *hide* [MSG](#). “[Autolyzed yeast](#)” (see p. 77) is one of the disguising ingredients that are especially common in bouillon. You are much better off making your own (e.g., Beef Bouillon Cubes recipe on page 52 of this book)! If you ever discover a commercial variety that contains *no* additives, please send me an email with the brand name and complete ingredients list – I will be in *shock* if you find one! ☺

Bread

Most brands of bread below are listed here for use in making croutons, breadcrumbs or toast because they don't really work well for sandwiches. If you wish to make a sandwich, you'll likely need to make your own bread from scratch or, possibly, find a specialty bread store (like [Great Harvest](#) in Omaha, NE) or a bakery at your local grocery store or health food store that makes bread fresh daily using wholesome ingredients and no preservatives. Even so, you must read the ingredients thoroughly on these items, as well. Most additive-free breads at the grocery store are located in the fresh bakery section or in the freezer because they lack artificial preservatives to keep them from rotting when stored at room temperature. Brands that you purchase from the freezer section should be stored in your fridge or freezer at home, especially if you don't eat through a loaf very quickly.

- **Ezekiel 4:9 Sprouted Whole-Grain Bread (from “Food for Life” brand)** – This bread contains: “organic sprouted wheat, filtered water, organic malted barley, organic sprouted rye, organic sprouted barley, organic sprouted oats, organic sprouted millet, organic sprouted corn, organic sprouted brown rice, fresh yeast, organic wheat gluten, sea salt.” This bread does contain [malted barley](#) (see p. 79), which can be problematic for some folks. This brand is becoming more widely available, and I've seen it in the freezer section of regular grocery stores in Omaha, NE (e.g., Bag 'N Save). Prices vary greatly by store, and this bread is generally located in the freezer section.
- **French Meadow Bakery brand** - These organic breads contain very few ingredients and no sweeteners. For example, this brand's “Spelt” variety contains just: “organic spelt flour (wheat), filtered water, and sea salt.” I use this bread to make my own breadcrumbs when I don't have time to make my bread from scratch. Whole Foods Market in Omaha, NE carries this brand (in the **freezer** section near the dining area). This brand is also available in a “Cinnamon Raisin” variety that is great as buttered toast and contains just: “organic spelt flour (wheat), filtered water, organic raisins, sea salt, and organic cinnamon.”
- Bakeries that make bread *daily* are another potential source for additive-free breads. For example, in the bakery department at Whole Foods Market in Omaha, NE, you can purchase freshly-made Ciabatta bread or rolls that contain just: “organic white flour, water, salt, yeast and cornmeal.” Essentially, you want to find breads for which the ingredient lists contain only items that you could actually buy for yourself at the store to make your own version if you were so inclined.

Breadcrumbs

As with so many things, it's best to play it safe and make your own so you can control the quality of the ingredients. Occasionally you may find a fresh and “unseasoned” variety available at a natural bakery (such as Whole Foods Market). Also, some natural food stores may carry additive-free brands in the baking aisle. Whole Foods Market in Omaha, NE carries [Edward & Sons](#) brand which offers 3 varieties that are additive-free (Lightly Salted, Panko, and Italian). As an example, the “Lightly Salted” variety contains: “wheat flour, yeast, palm oil, and salt.” I prefer to make my own breadcrumbs, instead.

Broth

I have found a couple additive-free varieties of *vegetable* broth available commercially, but I have never found a brand of store-bought *chicken* or *beef* broth or stock that was acceptable because they tend to contain potential MSG-disguising ingredients like “[natural flavor](#)” (p. 80), “[spices](#)” (p. 81), etc.

[Pacific Natural Foods \(Organic\)](#) brand vegetable broth is additive-free. It contains: “filtered water, organic carrots, organic tomatoes, organic celery, organic onions, organic garlic, organic leeks, sea salt, organic bay leaves, organic parsley, and organic thyme.” It is available in a 32-oz. container, but some stores (e.g., Whole Foods Market in Omaha, NE) also carry 4-packs of 8-oz. containers. These smaller containers are very convenient for recipes that call for just 1 cup (8 oz.) of broth. **Trader Joe’s (Organic) brand Hearty Vegetable Broth** is also additive-free. It contains: “filtered water, organic carrots, organic celery, organic tomatoes, organic onions, organic leeks, organic garlic, sea salt, organic bay leaves, organic parsley, and organic thyme.” This broth is available at Trader Joe’s stores in a 32-oz. container.

Personally, I strongly prefer the *flavor* of homemade *chicken* broth (p. 33) over the flavor of these store-bought *vegetable* broths; but sometimes the convenience of a store-bought option is nice.

Brown Rice – (see “[Rice](#)” – p. 86)

Buns

The brand I’ve found with the *fewest* ingredients is “[Food for Life](#)” brand sprouted whole-grain buns. They do contain [malted barley](#) (see p. 79) which can be problematic for some folks. Here’s the full ingredients list: “organic sprouted wheat, malted barley, organic sprouted millet, organic sprouted barley, organic sprouted lentils, organic sprouted soybeans, organic sprouted spelt, filtered water, fresh yeast, sea salt.” These buns are a bit dry, so we prefer to grill them or toast them immediately before serving. They are generally located in the freezer section at natural food stores; and I’ve found them in the “organic” freezer section at some regular grocery stores, too (e.g., Bag ‘N Save in Omaha, NE).

Butter

Because butter is made from *milk*, please review the milk section of this guide (p. 74) before you continue reading this butter section! To avoid [genetically-modified organisms \(GMOs\)](#) (p. 69), choose *certified organic* dairy products. Many conventional (i.e., *not* organically-raised) dairy cows are given genetically-modified growth hormones and fed genetically-modified corn and soy.

REAL butter is a dairy product made from *cream*. It should only contain “cream” or “cultured cream” and, possibly, “salt.” Avoid brands containing “[natural flavor](#)” (p. 80). This additive is especially common in *unsalted* varieties. [Organic Valley](#) brand makes an unsalted version with no “natural flavor.” It contains *only* “cultured cream” and is sold at health food stores (and in Hy-Vee’s health section in Omaha, NE). Also avoid butter that contains “[annatto](#)” (p. 77). Annatto is added seasonally to some brands of butter (when milk quality is lower) because it gives butter a rich yellow color. Also avoid brands of butter that contain “[citric acid](#)” (p. 78).

My favorite store-bought butter is *Organic Valley* brand [Pasture Butter](#). This variety is salted and cultured butter from cows that are pastured (feasting in fields of green grass) May through September when CLAs and Omega 3s (healthy fats) are naturally highest. In Omaha, NE, I’ve seen this variety available at [Jane’s Health Market](#) in Benson, Whole Foods Market, and some Hy-Vee locations. It contains just “organic pasteurized sweet cream, salt, microbial cultures.”

Absolutely *never* buy **margarine**! It is not *real* food! Among other things, it generally contains trans fat – the kind of fat that is associated with heart disease and other health problems! If you can’t eat dairy, [coconut oil](#) (p. 65) makes a great butter substitute in many recipes (and on baked potatoes). The coconut taste may take a little getting used to (and I was no coconut fan at first, myself), but it will grow on you with time!

(Continued on next page...)

Butter (cont.)

WHIPPED BUTTER – If you enjoy the “spreadability” of margarine, then you may enjoy the “whipped butter” varieties offered by [Organic Valley](#) or [Land O’Lakes](#). Check the ingredients when buying whipped butter, and make sure it contains only “cream and salt.” You’re basically paying for air to be whipped into your butter, but at least there aren’t any additives in there. Just don’t confuse “whipped” butter with “spreadable” varieties which often contain canola oil, etc. Always check the ingredients list to be sure!

Canned Chicken– (see below; and see last paragraph of “[Meat](#)” section – p. 74)

Canned Tuna/Canned Salmon (or Canned Chicken)

Canned meats are generally less healthful than fresh meats, but they are great for making a quick salmon patty or to have on hand for those “I-forgot-to-plan-dinner” moments! Many varieties contain additives or poorly-defined ingredients like “[broth](#)” (p. 77) that can disguise MSG, so be sure to check the ingredients list.

Many tuna/salmon labels will claim they are canned “in water” on the front of the can. This simply indicates that the fish is packed in water, not oil. It gives no indication of what *else* may be added. Flip the can around, and you may be surprised! Often it will contain broth and/or other additives (e.g., “chicken flavor,” “modified food starch,” “calcium caseinate”). Choose brands containing ONLY “tuna/salmon/chicken, water and salt.”

Generally, you may need to purchase these items at a natural food store or the health food section of a regular grocery store. However, additive-free canned *salmon* is often available at regular grocery stores. At the regular grocery store, the “best” canned *tuna* I’ve seen is [StarKist Selects “Very Low Sodium”](#) variety. It contains just “tuna and water” (and no added salt)! Unfortunately, the canned fish products available at regular grocery stores are often “*farm-raised.*” “*Wild caught*” seafood products are preferable (p. 87), but you will likely only find these options at natural food stores or online.

Carbonated Water

This type of water contains added carbonation/fizz from carbon dioxide. It is also sold as “sparkling water,” “seltzer,” “fizzy water” or “club soda.” Check the ingredients to be sure it contains only “water and carbon dioxide” and no added “salt.” Do not purchase *flavored* varieties or *sweetened* versions because they contain sweeteners and artificial flavors. Carbonated water is available at most grocery stores in the soda or water section. Because carbonated water is acidic, ingesting it (especially in large quantities) may result in the formation of damaging free radicals, erosion of tooth enamel, and leaching of minerals from the bones. Thus, this type of water should be enjoyed only in *moderation*.

Cardamom (Ground)

This is a dry spice (seasoning) located in the spice/baking section of any grocery store. I have never personally seen any additives in this product.

Carob Powder

Carob powder is made from the dried edible pulp of a tropical pod, and it makes a great cocoa powder replacement. Unlike cocoa powder, carob powder is naturally a bit sweet and contains no caffeine. It does have a slightly different taste that takes a little bit of adjusting to (to me, it’s like a cross between cocoa and coffee). This powder is available in the baking section (near the cocoa powder) in most natural food stores and health food sections or online. I’ve never seen any additives or extra ingredients in carob powder, but check the package label to be sure it contains *only* “carob powder.”

Cayenne Pepper - (see “[Ground Cayenne Pepper](#)” – p. 70)

Celery Salt

Look for a brand containing just “celery seed and salt.” In Omaha, NE, [Durkee](#) brand at Bag ‘N Save grocery store is additive-free. I sometimes find additive-free celery salt in the bags of spices near the produce section at my local stores. [Frontier](#) and [Simply Organic](#) are two organic brands available at natural food stores. Both contain just “sea salt and celery seed” - and both brands are available online, as well. If you can’t find a brand that is free of additives or anti-caking agents, then just purchase plain “celery seed” (in the spice aisle) and substitute 3 parts celery seed and 1 part salt for whatever amount of “celery salt” is required for a recipe.

Chardonnay Wine

Because Chardonnay is a wine, it contains varying amounts of [sulfites](#) (p. 89). Wine production also involves yeast and a fermentation process, which often generates [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76). If you are sensitive to glutamic acid and/or sulfites, you may do best to limit or avoid most wine.

Cheddar Cheese – (see “[Cheese](#)” section - *below*)

Cheese

Because cheese is made from *milk*, please review the milk section of this guide (p. 74) before you continue reading this cheese section!

Do not purchase pre-shredded cheeses because they contain additives (e.g., “powdered cellulose,” “potato starch,” “corn starch”) to keep the cheese shreds from clumping together in the package. Just buy a block of cheese, and shred it yourself at home with a cheese shredder. Doing so will usually save you money, too! Cheese shredders are available at any department store and usually in the kitchen utensils section of any major grocery store, as well. Check the ingredients list on any cheese you buy (blocks or slices). The list should contain nothing more than: “milk, salt, culture and/or enzymes” - except for varieties like Pepper Jack, which will also contain “jalapenos.”

If possible, avoid **orange** cheeses such as **American**, **Cheddar** and **Colby**. The orange color is *not* natural; it is from an additive such as “[annatto](#)” (p. 77). White (i.e., uncolored) Cheddar and Colby are available at most natural foods stores or the health section of a regular grocery store.

Ideally, avoid cheeses made from skim milk or low-fat milk because [dry milk solids](#) (p. 78) are often added to increase the protein content of these milk varieties. Dry milk solids may contain [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76), and they aren’t necessarily labeled on the ingredients list. Individuals who are sensitive to MSG (i.e., “[free glutamic acid](#)”) may have physical reactions to dry milk solids in such cheeses. Check the ingredients on *every* cheese you buy. Don’t assume that it’s okay just because it’s “certified organic,” either. I have seen “organic” varieties that contain added ingredients such as “[dry milk](#)” (p. 78) that were actually listed on the label!

[Enzymes](#) (p. 78) are used in the processing of many cheeses, and they cause symptoms in some MSG-sensitive folks. Enzymes may release [free glutamic acid](#) from the milk protein, and some people are extremely sensitive to heightened levels of this amino acid in their system (p. 76). If you suspect a reaction, select imported cheeses that use “cultures” (i.e., bacteria) instead of enzyme processing.

Mozzarella – This variety of cheese is generally made from part-skim milk; so if you are sensitive to [MSG](#) (or “[free glutamic acid](#)” – p. 76), you may want to use a different variety, instead.

Parmesan – You may be surprised at the number of ingredients (e.g., “anti-caking agents”) on that shaker can of Parmesan cheese that you may be accustomed to purchasing. Instead, purchase a block of Parmesan (often found in the specialty cheese section near the deli at your grocery store), and shred your own. Sometimes in this specialty section, a grocer will also sell varieties of freshly shredded (and/or freshly grated) Parmesan that contain no anti-caking ingredients. Just check the labels.

Provolone – At many stores, this variety of cheese is only available in the specialty cheese section near the deli, so don’t panic if you don’t find it in the regular cheese section. Just ask someone for assistance.

Chicken – (see “[Meat](#)” – p. 72)

Chicken Broth – (see “[Broth](#)” – p. 61)

Chili Powder

Many commercially available chili powders (and other seasoning blends for that matter) contain vague ingredients (e.g., the word “[spices](#)” – p. 81) that may be used to disguise things like [MSG](#) (p. 76)! If you’re able to find a brand with a “clean” label that lists each *individual* herb/spice and contains no mysterious words, that’s great. Otherwise, try the homemade recipe on page 51 – it’s simple! In Omaha, NE, I have found an additive-free chili powder in one of the most unlikely places – the *dollar section* at No Frills and Bag ‘N Save supermarkets. The brand name is [Spice Supreme](#), and it contains the following ingredients: “chili pepper, cumin, oregano, garlic powder and salt.”

Chipotle Powder

Chipotles are dried, smoked jalapeno peppers; so this powder is a bit spicy. You’ll need to adjust the amounts in any recipe to your own taste. [Frontier](#) brand is organic and contains no added ingredients. It contains only “ground chipotles,” and it may be found in natural food stores (like Whole Foods Market in Omaha, NE) or [online](#). If you can’t get your hands on this item, you may be able to find *whole* chipotle peppers at your local grocery store (often in the produce section with the other bags of dried peppers) or at an ethnic specialty store. You can grind the dried chipotles yourself in a blender to make your own powder – it will be a bit coarser than the pre-ground varieties, but it will work just as well.

Chocolate Chips

Many varieties contain “[natural flavor](#)” (p. 80) or “[high fructose corn syrup](#)” (p. 79), and both should be avoided. I’m not a big advocate of using chocolate chips, but if you must...the brand I’ve found with the *fewest* ingredients is [Enjoy Life](#). They sell a dairy-free/soy-free, semi-sweet variety that contains just: “evaporated cane juice, chocolate liquor, non-dairy cocoa butter.” Many *other* brands of chocolate chips also contain an additive called [soy lecithin](#) (p. 81) - an ingredient that may contain [GMOs](#) (p. 69) and processed glutamate (p. 76).

Cilantro

This fresh herb is located in the produce section at most grocery stores. Generally, it’s kept in the refrigerated section. For most recipes, feel free to use the thin stems as well as the leaves! Use caution when purchasing cilantro because it looks very similar to another fresh herb, flat-leaf Italian parsley – but they taste *nothing* alike!

Cinnamon – (see “[Ground Cinnamon](#)” - p. 70)

Cloves - (see “[Ground Cloves](#)” - p. 70)

Cocoa Nibs

These are *unsweetened* raw bits of cocoa beans. The only ingredient should be “cocoa.” Unlike *chocolate chips*, nibs contain no added sweeteners. Because cocoa itself is actually *bitter*, these do *not* taste sweet at *all* when eaten alone. They are great to add to sweetened treats, like ice cream; and they are typically only found in natural food stores, health food sections or [online](#). When you hear about the health benefits of chocolate (e.g., decreased blood pressure and improved cholesterol levels), *this* is where the benefits originate – in the pure, unsweetened cocoa beans!

Cocoa Powder, Unsweetened – (see “[Unsweetened Cocoa Powder](#)” - p. 91)

Coconut Flour

This gluten-free and grain-free flour is made from coconuts instead of wheat or another grain. I use it for only *one* recipe in this book; so don't worry if it's not available where you live – just skip that recipe. It's sold online, in natural food stores and health sections, or in gluten-free aisles at many grocery stores. It's also fairly expensive, so you may decide to skip my “Coconut Bread” recipe (p. 38) to save some money. ☺

Coconut Oil (Unrefined)

I use coconut oil regularly in my recipes, and it is the oil we use most often for cooking at our house. Make sure the brand you purchase is labeled as “unrefined,” as these varieties contain no additives and are less processed than “refined” coconut oils. Researchers have linked coconut oil to a variety of health benefits including lowered risk of diabetes and heart disease, improved cholesterol levels, prevention of osteoporosis, improved metabolism, and fatigue prevention. Unlike many oils, coconut oil maintains its health properties and does not go rancid when cooked at medium heat. This oil adds great flavor to foods - especially eggs, vegetables, and popcorn!

If you think you don't like coconut, please don't let that stop you from trying this oil. It may just be the waxy flavor and texture of most *sweetened, dried* coconut that displeases you. Coconut *oil* is totally different, and I know many people who claim to “hate coconut” but end up *loving* coconut oil. In fact, I am one of those people!

You can purchase *unrefined* coconut oil in natural food stores (e.g., Whole Foods, No Name Nutrition and Jane's Health Market in Omaha, NE), health sections (like Hy-Vee in Omaha, NE) or online. In Omaha, NE, I've even found it at Wal-Mart! [Spectrum Organics](#) is one of the many brands that make this type of oil.

Notes: Unlike most cooking oils, coconut oil is liquid at temperatures 76°F and above, and it's *solid* at room temperature and below. Also, coconut oil is sometimes used as a gentle laxative. Use caution and start slowly with your consumption until you determine how it affects you. ☺

Corn Chips

I recommend in my recipes that you substitute corn chips for crackers if you'd like to add something crunchy to your soups. Many commercially-available corn chips (even the organic varieties) are deep fried in unhealthy oils. We prefer to make our *own* homemade baked corn chips using the recipe on page 43. If you choose to eat store-bought chips, I suggest incorporating them into your diet as an *occasional* treat rather than a frequent snack. To avoid [genetically-modified organisms \(GMOs\)](#) (p. 69), be sure to purchase corn chips only if they are “certified organic” or “non-GMO verified.”

Corn Tortillas

If you purchase corn tortillas from a grocery store shelf that is *not* refrigerated, chances are good that you'll find a long ingredients list full of preservatives on the back of the package. Look for brands in the refrigerated section that contain just “corn, water and trace of lime.” For example, Whole Foods Market in Omaha, NE carries organic baked corn tortillas in their store brand (“365 Organic”) that meet these criteria. They contain: “organic whole corn, water, trace of lime.” Trader Joe's also carries an additive-free variety in their store brand that contains just: “stone ground corn, water, and traces of lime.” Use baked corn tortillas such as these rather than flour tortillas that are typically fried in oil. To avoid [genetically-modified organisms \(GMOs\)](#) (p. 69), be sure to purchase corn products only if they are “certified organic” or “non-GMO verified.” (According to Trader Joe's website, however, all products sold under their store brand are GMO-free, regardless of whether or not they are labeled as such.)

Cream – (see “[Whipping Cream](#)” – p. 92)

Croutons

Many store-bought versions are *full* of additives. It's best to make your own (see recipe on page 36) using homemade bread or a store-bought bread made with minimal ingredients and no additives (see "[Bread](#)" section on page 60 for suggested brands). Your best chance of finding an additive-free version at the store is to check with your bakery. Some bakeries make fresh, additive-free croutons - just look for ingredient lists similar to those listed in the "[Bread](#)" section on page 60.

Crushed Garlic – (see "[Garlic](#)" – p. 68)

Cumin (Powder) – (see "[Ground Cumin](#)" – p. 70)

Diced Tomatoes – (see "[Tomato Products, canned](#)" – p. 90)

Dijon Mustard – (see "[Mustard](#)" – p. 82)

Dried Basil

This is a dry spice (seasoning) located in the spice/baking section of any grocery store. I have never personally seen any additives in this product.

Dried Dill

This is a dry spice (seasoning) located in the spice/baking section of any grocery store. I have never personally seen any additives in this product.

Dried Oregano

This is a dry spice (seasoning) located in the spice/baking section of any grocery store. I have never personally seen any additives in this product.

Dried Unsweetened Coconut

The dried coconut available in the baking aisles of regular grocery stores often contains additives like "propylene glycol" and "sodium metabisulfite." Instead, purchase dried coconut at a natural food store or in a health section (like Hy-Vee in Omaha, NE), and make sure it contains *only* "coconut."

Dry Mustard ("Mustard Powder")

This is a dry spice (seasoning) located in the spice/baking section of any grocery store. I have never personally seen any additives in this product.

Dry Onion Flakes

This is a dry spice (seasoning) located in the spice/baking section of any grocery store. It is also sometimes referred to as "minced onion" or "dry minced onion." I have never personally seen any additives in this product.

Dry Sherry

Because Dry Sherry is a wine, it naturally contains varying amounts of [sulfites](#) (p. 89). Wine production also involves yeast and a fermentation process, which often generates [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76). If you are sensitive to glutamic acid and/or sulfites, you may do best to limit or avoid most wine.

Dry White Wine

Wines naturally contain varying amounts of [sulfites](#) (p. 89). Wine production also involves yeast and a fermentation process, which often generates [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76). If you are sensitive to glutamic acid and/or sulfites, you may do best to limit or avoid most wine.

Egg Noodles – (see “[Pasta](#)” – p. 84)

Eggs

Definitely do *not* use egg substitutes! Buy *real, whole* eggs, and crack them yourself! For optimum health benefit, purchase farm-fresh eggs from a local farm whose chickens are “**pastured**” (i.e., allowed to roam freely on grassy pastures). Compared to typical commercial eggs, those from pastured hens are richer in vitamin D, omega 3 fatty acids, vitamin B12, folic acid and Vitamin A. If you aren’t familiar with how most commercial eggs are raised, I encourage you to research “factory farms” on the Internet - but make sure you’re prepared to see some very disturbing graphics and footage. You can also visit www.EatWild.com for more great information about pasture-raised versus factory-farmed animal products.

Many stores now carry locally-raised eggs from small family farms. Ideally, make sure they are “pasture-raised.” Even eggs labeled as “cage-free,” for example, may come from hens that are raised indoors their entire lives! Another great place to start is to visit your local farmers markets. Often there are farmers there selling eggs. At our local markets, eggs sell out very quickly, so you need to arrive shortly after market opens unless you order in advance. If your markets are not year-round, you can also make arrangements with some farmers who deliver their eggs to town monthly throughout the off-season. If you wish to avoid [genetically-modified organisms \(GMOs\)](#) (p. 69), purchase eggs that are *certified organic* or raised by a farmer you trust and who does not feed a genetically-modified diet to the chickens.

Farm-fresh, pastured eggs are *particularly* important when eggs are consumed **raw**. These eggs come from chickens that live in environments and maintain states of health that are less conducive to the spread of bacteria like salmonella.

If you buy eggs at a store, there’s very little chance that the chickens were raised in an environment that in *any* way approximates the image of the red barn and open fields depicted on the carton! Companies make all sorts of claims on their packaging (e.g., “cage-free,” “natural,” “free-range”) which imply one thing to consumers but, in reality, mean quite another. Many of these terms are not regulated. Even “certified organic” chickens are only required to “have access to the outdoors,” which doesn’t mean that they actually ever set foot outside. They can be housed in a large building that has an *opening* (similar to a “doggie door”) to an outdoor space.

Now, take a moment to picture in your mind what that “outdoor space” may look like. Did you envision a fenced *cement* patio? Well, that *is* sufficient and permissible as “outdoor space” according to organic regulations. See the problem? The only way to *truly* know how your eggs are raised is to visit the local farm from which you purchase them...or raise egg-layers *yourself*. It may surprise you to learn how many municipalities (e.g., Omaha, NE) *do* allow city folks to raise egg-laying hens in their own backyards, so check your local codes!

Extra Virgin Olive Oil – (see “[Olive Oil](#)” – p. 83)

Fennel Seed

This is a dry spice (seasoning) located in the spice/baking section of any grocery store. I have never personally seen any additives in this product. There is also a spice called “fennel powder,” which is *ground* fennel seed. Fennel powder is *not* what my recipes require, so be sure you buy the whole *seeds*.

Fish – (see “[Seafood](#)” – p. 87)

Flax Meal

Flax meal is made by grinding flax seeds. Flax seeds contain Omega 3 fatty acids (good, heart-healthy fats), and they are also a good source of fiber which is great for bowel function. Some researchers suggest that flax seeds may even reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease and some types of cancer. Flax seeds can be purchased in ground (i.e., flax meal) or whole form at most natural foods stores. They are also available in the “health section” at many grocery stores or online. At many stores, flax seeds and flax meal are available in the bulk bins, so you can purchase *just* the amount you *need* rather than an entire package. There are two varieties of flax seeds - brown and golden. The golden variety is more easily disguised in some recipes (e.g., [Super Simple Mayo](#) – p. 51), but either variety will work. You can make your own flax *meal* at home by grinding whole flax seeds in a blender or coffee grinder. Some sources suggest that it is best to grind flax seeds *fresh* each time you use them because they turn rancid quite easily after they are ground. Alternatively, you may store ground flax seed in an air-tight, opaque container in the fridge or freezer between uses. As always, do your own research, and do whatever works best for you.

Flour – (see “[Whole-Wheat Flour](#)” – p. 93; “[Unbleached White Flour](#)” – p. 91)

Fresh Basil

This fresh herb is located in the produce section at most grocery stores. Remove leaves from the stem. Discard the stem; and slice, dice or chop the leaves to add wonderful flavor to your dish! Fresh basil doesn’t store well, so purchase it within a day or two of when you’ll be using it.

Fresh Chives

This fresh herb is located in the produce section of most grocery stores; generally in a refrigerated section.

Fresh Garlic – (see “[Garlic](#)” – p. 68)

Fresh Mint Leaves

This fresh herb is located in the produce section of most grocery stores; generally in a refrigerated section.

Freshly Ground (Cracked) Black Pepper – (see “[Black Pepper](#)” – p. 59)

Garlic (“Fresh Garlic,” “Garlic Cloves”)

Unless my recipe specifies “garlic *granules*,” the word “garlic” in my cookbook refers to *fresh* garlic. *Fresh* garlic is located in the produce section of any grocery store, usually near the onions. An entire “bunch” of garlic is called a “bulb” or a “head,” and each piece that you can break off is called a “clove.” Most of my recipes require just a few *cloves*, but some of my recipes (e.g., homemade chicken broth) require an *entire* head/bulb.

There is a dry skin holding all of the cloves together as a bulb, and there is also a skin on each individual clove that must be removed prior to eating. A great way to remove the skin from each clove is to lay the clove on a cutting board and place the side of a large knife blade on top of it. Then give the blade a good whack on top with your palm and it will smash the clove a bit and break up the skin for easy removal.

Store *unpeeled* garlic at room temperature (on your counter is fine). If you use a lot of garlic, you can peel a week’s worth of cloves and store them in an air-tight container in your fridge so you’ll have fresh garlic ready to go whenever you need it.

Different recipes require fresh garlic in different *forms*. Sometimes you’ll need to “mince” the garlic with a knife and for some recipes it’s best to “crush” or “press” it using a garlic press. Do not use store-bought, jarred varieties of garlic that have been pre-crushed because they generally contain additives, and their flavor cannot compare to that of *fresh*, raw garlic.

Garlic Granules (“Granulated Garlic”)

This is a dry spice (seasoning) located in the spice/baking section of any grocery store. I have never personally seen any additives in this product. Garlic granules are often labeled as “garlic powder.” True garlic *powder* is the consistency of flour, and garlic *granules* are closer to the consistency of salt. If you cannot find garlic *granules* at your grocery store, peek through the sides of the garlic *powder* containers, and look for one that appears to be coarser than flour. That will work just fine.

If all you can find is true garlic *powder* (with a flour consistency), then substitute half the amount called for in my recipes. Avoid most store-bought “garlic salt;” however, as these *blends* often contain additives and/or artificial flavor enhancers. They are often *not* comprised *solely* of “garlic” and “salt” as you may presume.

GMOs (Genetically-Modified Organisms; Genetically-Engineered Foods)

GMO stands for “**Genetically-Modified Organisms**” (also referred to as “**Genetically-Engineered**” Foods). Currently, there are products in our food supply that contain organisms whose genetic structures have been manipulated by scientists to express certain traits that increase the food industry’s profits. For example, scientists have created plants that are able to withstand an otherwise deadly dose of weed killer. Once you start researching this GMO issue, you quickly become aware of the insufficient safety testing and the undeniable conflict of interest that surrounded the initial approval (and the ongoing presence) of GMOs in our food supply. I recommend the Institute for Responsible Technology (www.ResponsibleTechnology.org) as a great place for everyone to start doing their own research on this topic.

Many researchers are concerned about the possible negative health consequences of altering our food supply in this fashion. There is increasing evidence from animal studies of a connection between GMOs and health problems such as allergies, reproductive problems and faulty insulin regulation. Unfortunately, the FDA does not require safety testing of these products, so the biotech companies are responsible for deciding whether or not their *own* products are safe enough to unleash on the human population. Because the FDA also does not require these GMOs to be *labeled* on food packages, all of us are essentially participating in a long-term safety test of these organisms *without* our consent.

As of November 2012, the most commonly genetically-modified foods on the market are: **corn, soy, dairy, Hawaiian papayas, sugar (from sugar beets), canola oil, cottonseed oil, aspartame (artificial sweetener), zucchini, and some yellow squash.** [Aspartame](#) (p. 77) is a neurotoxin that I don’t recommend ingesting. When you purchase the *other* foods on this list, be sure to select items labeled as “*non-GMO verified*” or “*certified organic*” because GMOs are not allowed in products with these certifications. If you don’t have access to non-GMO versions of the foods listed here, then you may choose to eliminate them from your diet altogether.

Because I don’t feel comfortable with GMOs in my diet, I do my best to avoid them. I have included here in my shopping guide the information you will need if you choose to avoid them, as well. In addition to the foods listed above, you must be careful to check ingredient lists for products that are *derived from* these foods. For example, cornstarch and white vinegar are both *derived from* corn. If a food product contains ingredients derived from corn, these ingredients may be genetically-modified unless they are labeled as “certified organic” or “non-GMO verified.” Genetically-modified soy and dairy are also tricky to avoid because they are used to create so many other ingredients in food products, as well. For example, casein and whey are both food ingredients that are derived from milk, and soy lecithin is derived from soy. Again, unless *each* of these individual derivatives is specifically labeled as “certified organic” or “non-GMO verified” in the ingredients list of a product, then it may contain GMOs.

(Continued on next page...)

GMOs (cont.)

Dairy products are listed here because many commercially-raised dairy cows are treated with the genetically-modified growth hormone rbST/rbGH to increase milk production (see "[Milk](#)" - p. 74). To avoid this growth hormone in dairy products, select brands that are labeled as "certified organic," "rbGH-free," or "rbST-free." Of course, when milk ingredients are added to *other* food products (e.g., milk chocolate bars), there is usually no indication on the labels as to whether or not the cows were treated with hormones. You must avoid these milk-derived ingredients, as well, to be certain you're avoiding these growth hormones.

Another less obvious source of GMOs is conventionally-raised animal products in general. If you purchase commercial meat, milk (even "hormone-free" milk) or egg products that are not "certified organic," those animals may eat a diet that contains GMO corn and/or soy. It is uncertain whether or not the GMOs fed to animals will directly impact *our* health if we ingest these products, but I am not comfortable with participating in *this* experiment, either, so I choose to avoid them.

The sugar on the market that is genetically-modified is made from **sugar beets** that are not "certified organic" or "non-GMO verified." The white sugar that you purchase at the grocery store is likely made from **sugar cane** and, thus, is *not* genetically-modified. However, to avoid GMOs when you purchase processed food items (e.g., ketchup) that contain "**sugar**" in the ingredients list, you must verify that the sugar used is either "**cane sugar**" or is "certified organic" or "non-GMO verified" sugar from beets. Also, **molasses** is derived from sugar cane and/or sugar beets. When molasses is extracted from sugar *beets*, it may contain GMOs unless it is specifically labeled as "certified organic" or "non-GMO verified." **Yeast** is another possible source of GMOs. The production of yeast involves sugar. When sugar beets (or molasses extracted from sugar beets) are utilized, GMOs may be present unless the molasses and/or sugar beets are non-GMO.

Grapeseed Oil

Grapeseed oil is pressed from the seeds of grapes. It has a fairly neutral flavor, so it's a great choice for making homemade mayonnaise. (This oil does have a slightly green hue, though, so your mayo might be a little green in color - but it will taste great!) This oil is available at most grocery stores in the baking aisle or cooking oil section. Look for a brand that contains "grapeseed oil" as the *only* ingredient.

Ground Beef – (see "[Meat](#)" – p. 72)

Ground Cayenne Pepper

This is a dry spice (seasoning) located in the spice/baking section of any grocery store. I have never personally seen any additives in this product. Cayenne is a hot pepper, so this is spicy!

Ground Cinnamon

This is a dry spice (seasoning) located in the spice/baking section of any grocery store. I have never personally seen any additives in this product.

Ground Cloves

This is a dry spice (seasoning) located in the spice/baking section of any grocery store. I have never personally seen any additives in this product.

Ground Cumin

This is a dry spice (seasoning) located in the spice/baking section of any grocery store. I have never personally seen any additives in this product. There are many recipes in my cookbook that require cumin; and some of them use a large amount, so purchase a large container if possible. I have found it difficult to locate *large* containers of cumin at many stores in Omaha, NE; but often there are larger/cheaper containers available in the spice section in the fresh produce area, rather than in the spice aisle. Another possible source is the bulk spice sections at natural food stores (e.g., Whole Foods Market and Jane's Health Market in Omaha, NE) where you can scoop out however much you need! You can also shop for ground cumin online.

Ground Ginger

This is a dry spice (seasoning) located in the spice/baking section of any grocery store. I have never personally seen any additives in this product.

Ground Lamb – (see “[Meat](#)” – p. 72)

Heavy Cream – (see “[Whipping Cream](#)” – p. 92)

Herbes de Provence

This is a dry spice blend found in the spice/baking aisle of some grocery stores. It may also be found at specialty spice stores like [Penzy Spice](#). In Omaha, NE, Whole Foods Market carries this blend in their store brand, and it contains: “savory, thyme, rosemary, basil, tarragon, and lavender flowers.” Instead of using this store-bought blend, I sometimes just substitute a combination of dried thyme, basil and rosemary (because I keep those on hand), and it works well for the recipes in my cookbook! You can also search online for recipes to make your *own* Herbes de Provence blend from scratch using a combination of individual dried herbs if you prefer.

Honey – (see “[Sugars/Sweeteners](#)” – p. 88)

Hot Sauce

Brands such as [Tabasco](#) and [Louisiana](#) are available at most grocery stores, and they contain just: “peppers, vinegar and salt.” Avoid brands containing “[guar gum](#)” (p. 79), “[xanthan gum](#)” (p. 82), “[spices](#)” (p. 81) and other additives. Avoid most *flavored* varieties, as well, because they often contain additives and artificial flavorings. Many commercial varieties of hot sauce also have an incredibly high sodium content, so use hot sauce sparingly rather than as a daily condiment. Unless otherwise stated on an ingredients label, the “vinegar” contained in store-bought condiments is likely *white vinegar from corn*. Because it is distilled from glutamate-rich *corn*, [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76) may be present in *any* brand of hot sauce that contains *white vinegar*. I have never *personally* experienced a reaction from eating commercial condiments, however. Because white vinegar is made from *corn*, it is also a possible source of [genetically-modified organisms \(GMOs\)](#) (p. 69) unless it is “certified organic” or “non-GMO verified.”

Italian Seasoning Blend

Whole Foods Market in Omaha, NE carries a certified organic variety of this spice blend by [Frontier](#) brand; and it contains: “oregano, marjoram, thyme, basil, rosemary and sage.” This brand is available [online](#), as well. I have also found additive-free versions of this blend in the dollar aisle at regular grocery stores (e.g., No Frills in Omaha, NE), but they are not certified organic. I primarily use this blend for making the [Crock Pot Chicken Broth](#) recipe on page 33, but I often just substitute 1 TBSP each of dried oregano, dried thyme and dried basil instead. It turns out great with this substitution, so don’t worry if you can’t find a pre-made blend.

Juice (Fruit or Veggie)

Freshly-squeezed juice from raw fruits/veggies is always best. If you insist on purchasing store-bought varieties, at least look for brands with ingredient labels that list *solely* fruits and/or veggies (e.g., apple juice should contain ONLY “apple juice”). Ignore claims on the *front* of the package. Many brands say, “100% juice” on the *front* of the container; but if you look at the ingredients, you’ll find they contain more than just juice (e.g., “[natural flavor](#)” – p. 80). Always do your research. Additionally, store-bought commercial juice varieties are *pasteurized* (i.e., “heated”), so the nutrient levels are not the same as from *fresh* juice made at home from *raw* fruits and veggies. It is also important to note that fruit juices (even when freshly-made) are *loaded* with sugar, so use accordingly!

Ketchup

The most additive-free variety I've found on the market is [Annie's Naturals](#) brand (available at *Super Target* and *Whole Foods Market* in Omaha, NE). It contains only "organic tomato paste, organic distilled white vinegar, water, cane sugar, sea salt, organic onion, organic allspice, and organic clove." Many other brands contain additives like "[spices](#)" (p. 81), "[natural flavor](#)" (p. 80), and/or "[high fructose corn syrup](#)" (p. 79). White vinegar is a common ingredient in ketchup. Because it is distilled from glutamate-rich corn, [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76) may be present in *any* brand of ketchup that contains *white* vinegar. I have never *personally* experienced a reaction from eating commercial condiments, however. Because white vinegar is made from corn, it is also a possible source of [genetically-modified organisms \(GMOs\)](#) (p. 69) unless it is "certified organic" or "non-GMO verified."

Lemon/Lime Juice

Store-bought varieties are *pasteurized* (i.e., "cooked") and many are filled with additives. Additionally, the flavor of these products pales in comparison to freshly-squeezed juice! Some health stores carry pure, additive-free juice in glass jars in the juice aisle, but these varieties are still cooked (i.e., not fresh). If you do purchase these store-bought juices, be sure the *only* ingredient is lemon juice or lime juice! However, this is one short-cut you don't want to take unless you have to. I strongly recommend buying *whole* lemons and limes and juicing them *yourself*! Hand juicers work great for this purpose, and they are readily available at most department stores or in the kitchen utensils section of most grocery stores.

Lentils, dry

Lentils are a high-protein member of the legume family, but they are quite different in appearance compared to beans like kidney beans or black beans. They are smaller, flatter disks that are available naturally in a variety of colors. At most grocery stores, they can be purchased in dry form in the section where dry beans and rice are sold.

Long-Grain Brown Rice – (see "[Rice](#)" – p. 86)

Mayonnaise

Common additives in commercial mayo that you'll want to avoid include: "[spice\(s\)](#)" (p. 81), "[natural flavor](#)" (p. 80), and "[modified food starch](#)" (p. 79). Many commercial varieties also include unhealthy oils. I'm not aware of any store-bought brands that I would recommend, so I have included a homemade recipe on page 51.

Meat

Ideally, we would all purchase animal products exclusively from local, grass-based farms where we could verify how the animals are treated and raised by visiting the farms *ourselves*. This is what I have chosen to do as much as possible for *my* family. However, I realize that won't be everyone's choice, so I am providing information here to help you make the most informed decisions possible at your grocery store.

Meat products from animals that are raised on grass pasture (i.e., their natural diet and environment) taste better and are better for our health than animal products from factory-farmed animals that may be subjected to unnatural practices (e.g., antibiotics, growth hormones, inhumane confinement, limited or no access to the outdoors, etc.). Pasture-raised animal products are lower in calories and fat, and they contain higher levels of healthy Omega 3 fatty acids and antioxidants.

If you aren't familiar with how most commercial meats are farmed, I encourage you to research "factory farms" on the Internet - but make sure you're prepared to see some very disturbing graphics and footage. You can also visit www.EatWild.com for more great information about the health benefits of pasture-raised versus factory-farmed animal products. If you wish to avoid [genetically-modified organisms \(GMOs\)](#) (p. 69), purchase meat products that are *certified organic* or raised by a farmer you trust and who does not feed a genetically-modified diet to the animals. (*Continued on next page...*)

Meat (cont.)

If you choose to purchase meat products at the grocery store, you must ignore *most* of the claims on the *front* of the package. Save yourself the headache and flip straight to the ingredients list. No matter how “natural” or “free of artificial ingredients” a product claims to be on the *front*, you **MUST** check the back and find the ingredients list. Many of the words used to make claims on the front of packaging are *not* regulated (e.g., “natural”), so they really have *no* meaning because companies say whatever they want to get you to buy their products.

Also, just because you purchase meat from the “fresh meat” case at the grocery store or your local butcher, that doesn’t guarantee it’s free of additives. You must *ask* the butcher or (preferably) the meat manager *directly*! Don’t expect to find the information stated on any label because most meat that is cut and/or wrapped *at* the grocery store *won’t* have the ingredients listed anywhere. Never assume that this means it’s *just* meat, as I have found this is often *not* the case! Tell the butcher that you need to know with *absolute* certainty that there are *no other* ingredients in the product besides meat.

Store-bought meats (whether purchased from the fresh meat counter or the meat cooler) are often injected with solutions to tenderize and/or preserve them. These solutions are often referred to as “*marinade*” or “*broth*” on the package, and they may contain [hidden sources of MSG](#) (p. 76). Note: By “solutions,” I am *not* referring to statements you’ll often see on the front of packaging about the percentage of “*water retained from processing*.” That phrase on the front label is *not* of concern from a *food additives* stand point. It does, however, indicate that you are paying for added *water* if the meat is priced by *weight*.

Be especially wary of *ground* chicken and *ground* turkey. I’ve rarely seen commercial varieties that don’t contain “[natural flavors](#)” (p. 80). Also be especially wary of purchasing meat from a store that has no butcher on site. Meat at such stores may contain preservative solutions to help “retain freshness” because it is cut and packaged at a distant location and then shipped to the store.

Please be aware that no store-bought cuts of meat are sacred – *any* cuts of meat *may* contain additives. If there is an ingredients list on the package, make sure it *only* contains meat! If there is no ingredients list on the package, steer clear of packages that mention “broth, solution, or marinade” in small print on the front of the package. If there is neither an ingredients list nor any information listed on the front, don’t assume you’re in the clear – always ask the butcher or meat manager to be *sure*!

There are a few particular brands of meat in Omaha, NE that are generally additive-free. Things do change, so always double-check before purchasing the items mentioned here. These are good places to start for increasing your odds of finding additive-free cuts: [Just Bare](#) and [Smart Chicken](#) brands of chicken, [Farmland](#) brand pork, and most meats that are cut and wrapped by the butchers at Bag ‘N Save, Fareway and No Frills supermarkets. Whole Foods Market, No Name Nutrition and Jane’s Health Market also carry many additive-free meats and local, farm-raised meats – many of which are also *grass-fed*.

At Costco in Omaha, NE, all *unseasoned* cuts of beef and chicken in the meat department are additive-free, but the butcher there informed me that the unseasoned *pork* products *do* contain a solution – even though it’s not labeled on the package. Again, always double-check with your butcher, especially for packages that don’t list ingredients!

As a general rule, meats cut and packaged at No Frills, Bag ‘N Save and Fareway stores in Omaha, NE are *likely* to be additive-free, but always double-check. Also, in Omaha, Hy-Vee stores carry **Amana beef** which is additive-free. Again, whether you purchase meat from a cooler or a fresh meat case (at *any* store), always double-check the ingredients!

Please also note that just because a brand or store carries an additive-free cut of a particular meat, that doesn’t mean that *all* of their meats are necessarily free of additives. Each item you purchase must be *individually* checked, even within the same brand! A special note about [Tyson Chicken](#): At the time of this writing, this brand carries a line of “All Natural” chicken, some of which contains a “broth” and some of which contains *just* chicken. Be sure to check *each* label!

(Continued on next page...)

Meat (cont.)

Aside from these solutions and seasonings that are added to meats *after* slaughter, there are also the issues of how an animal is raised and fed while it is *alive*. Please do not assume that just because you purchase meat at a health food store or natural market that it is automatically grass-fed and free-range. When purchasing “grass-fed” meats (even directly from a farmer), you must also verify that the meat is “grass-finished.” Grass-finished means that an animal was raised on pasture for its *entire* life...not fed grass for *most* of its life, labeled as “grass-fed,” and then fattened up on *corn* in its final weeks of life. This is one common “trick” used in the labeling of meats!

For the most part, if you want to ensure that your meat products are grass-fed, you will need to seek out local farmers *directly*. Again, I am not a fan of store-bought meats at all, and I do not support the way most of those animals are raised or fed. Unfortunately, even if you buy the most additive-free meat available at most stores, you are still most likely getting much more than just meat (e.g., antibiotics, hormones, corn-fed); but if you *must* purchase at the store, hopefully this helps you make some more informed decisions.

Canned Chicken – It is unlikely that you will find canned meats from animals that are raised in natural environments and fed species-appropriate diets. However, some stores do carry varieties that are at least *additive-free*. If you wish to purchase *canned* chicken, look for a brand that contains nothing more than: “chicken, water, and salt” (e.g., [Valley Fresh](#) brand at Bag ‘N Save in Omaha, NE). Avoid brands with additives such as “[modified food starch](#)” (p. 79) or “sodium phosphates.” I don’t recommend using canned products as a regular part of your diet due to the high sodium content, anyway, but you may wish to have a few cans around for occasional convenience or in case of power outages, etc.

Milk

It is best to purchase dairy products directly from local farmers. Ideally, purchase milk that is **raw** (i.e., *not* pasteurized/heated), **non-homogenized** and from cows raised on **pasture**. To avoid [genetically-modified organisms \(GMOs\)](#) (p. 69), choose *organically-raised* dairy products from cows that have not been administered growth hormones or fed genetically-modified corn and soy products.

Raw milk is preferable because the pasteurization (i.e., heating) process alters or destroys many of the nutrients (e.g., iodine, calcium, vitamin C) and beneficial bacteria that are naturally present in milk. Unfortunately, most store-bought milk is **pasteurized** because in most states (except California) it is *illegal* to sell raw milk in stores. In many U.S. states, it is even illegal for farmers to sell raw milk to customers *directly* from the farm. However, consumers in such states often find ways around these laws by forming buying clubs and co-ops. In other states (e.g. Nebraska), farmers can sell raw milk directly to customers, but they are *not* legally allowed to *advertise*. Obviously, it can be difficult to locate sources of raw milk if you live in a state that imposes such laws. One good place to inquire is at your local farmers market – especially with vendors who sell other animal products (e.g., meat, cheese, eggs).

If you can’t find raw or farm-fresh milk where you live, you may wish to omit milk from your diet. If you still wish to consume milk, try to find varieties that are at least **non-homogenized** and from **grass-fed** cows. Many natural food stores and health markets sell such varieties. **Grass-fed** milk is more nutritious. For example, it contains up to five times more CLA (conjugated linoleic acid), which is a healthy fat associated with lowered risk of cancer and heart attacks. One great resource for more information about the health and environmental benefits of pasture-raised animal products is www.EatWild.com.

Homogenization is another factor to consider when purchasing milk. When milk is homogenized, food companies break up the fat globules in the cream portion of the milk so the fat will disperse evenly throughout the milk rather than separating and floating to the top. Although negative health effects from this process have not been *proven*; homogenized milk does not exist in nature, so I encourage you to further research these issues and make an informed decision about which dairy products are best for your family. One great source of information about raw, natural milk is www.RealMilk.com.

(Continued on next page...)

Milk (cont.)

I do not recommend ingesting store-bought, pasteurized/homogenized milk varieties on a regular basis. If you *must* purchase store-bought pasteurized milk, ideally select *whole* milk that is non-homogenized, grass-fed and vat-pasteurized (heated at a lower temperature). In Omaha, NE, choose brands like [Farmer's Creamery](#) at Whole Foods Market or Hy-Vee Organic [store brand](#) (available in the health section at Hy-Vee grocery stores). If you're lucky enough to live in California where raw milk is sold in stores, that's a great option, too!

Most varieties that meet the requirements listed above will also happen to be "certified organic" and sold only at natural food stores and health sections. Organic milk is best if you wish to avoid growth hormones, as well. If organic varieties are not available to you, at least look for labels that state "No rbGH," which is the growth hormone administered to many dairy cows.

Dairy products are also naturally high in glutamate, so if you are sensitive to [monosodium glutamate](#) (p. 76), you may want to avoid pasteurized dairy altogether. The high heat used in the pasteurization process breaks down the natural glutamate contained in milk into a form that is more quickly absorbed into the blood stream (i.e., [free glutamic acid](#)) and can cause all sorts of symptoms. For the same reason, "[ultra-pasteurized](#)" (p. 82) dairy varieties should be avoided, as this process exposes the milk to *even higher* temperatures than regular pasteurization. Many organic brands are ultra-pasteurized, so read labels carefully.

Some "vat pasteurized" varieties are available commercially, and this process uses a lower temperature to sterilize the milk. These varieties are usually also organic and non-homogenized and found in health sections or natural foods stores. In Omaha, NE, Hy-Vee carries a [store brand](#) in their health section that meets these criteria and is organic; and Whole Foods Market carries such varieties as well (e.g., [Farmer's Creamery](#) and [Trader's Point Creamery](#) brands).

Commercial varieties of *skim* milk also have an additional set of issues. Sometimes [carrageenan](#) (p. 78) is added (presumably to thicken it), and this additive is a possible source of hidden [MSG](#) (p. 76). [Dry milk solids](#) (p. 78) and dry [whey](#) (p. 82) are sometimes added to skim milk to boost the protein content to federally-required levels; and it is my understanding that these ingredients do *not* have to be listed on the label. Both of these ingredients can cause physical reactions in folks who are sensitive to [MSG](#) (p. 76).

Commercially available *non-dairy* milks (e.g., soy milk, coconut milk, almond milk, rice milk) have problems of their own with concern to additives, even the unflavored (i.e., "plain") varieties. Check the label of whatever type and brand you purchase, but my quick review at one store revealed that most varieties are **ultra-pasteurized**. Coconut milk contained additives such as "natural flavors, gums, and carrageenan." Soy milk contained additives such as "[natural flavor](#)" (p. 80), sodium polyphosphate, dipotassium phosphate, "[carrageenan](#)" (p. 78), and "[xanthan gum](#)" (p. 82). Rice milk contained canola oil in the *plain* variety and "natural flavor" in every *flavored* variety. Almond milks contained, "natural flavor and gums." Many of these additives are potential sources of hidden [MSG](#) (p. 76) and cause physiological reactions for many people, so beware! If you *must* use a milk substitute, I recommend doing an Internet search for homemade recipes for almond, coconut or rice milk; so you can control the quality of your ingredients and avoid these additives.

Mint Extract

Purchase a brand that contains just "*mint oil (peppermint, spearmint, etc.), water and alcohol.*" Not every store will carry a brand that meets these criteria, and it doesn't seem to matter whether or not it's a health store. Mint extract is just not as commonly available as pure *vanilla* extract. I've found additive-free versions (like [McCormick](#) brand) at regular grocery stores, such as Bag 'N Save in Omaha, NE; and had *no* luck finding additive-free versions at some *natural* food stores. If you prefer a *certified organic* variety, [Flavorganics](#) brand is available online.

Mozzarella Cheese - (see "[Cheese](#)" – p. 63)

MSG (“Monosodium Glutamate”): Hidden Sources & Health Effects

Despite common perception, the toxic food additive MSG is everywhere - not just in Chinese food! This **unnecessary flavor enhancer** is actually *hidden under dozens of ingredient names* in *all sorts* of processed foods, restaurant foods, beverages, chewing gums, vitamins and supplements. It is added to foods in higher dosages than ever before, and more and more people are experiencing symptoms from ingesting it.

Monosodium Glutamate (MSG) is a **health concern** because it contains glutamate. Glutamate is the salt form of "**Free Glutamic Acid**." Glutamate is an **excitotoxin** that has been associated with many health problems (e.g., headaches, migraines, digestive distress, seizures, heart attacks, vision problems), and you'll find *many* more common symptoms if you do an Internet search for “symptoms of MSG toxicity.” Due to insufficient labeling laws, food companies use *many* ingredient names (like those listed in the following pages) to disguise Free Glutamic Acid in their products, so consumers must look for more than just "MSG" on food labels if they wish to avoid this toxin and its associated health effects.

To understand why processed **Free Glutamic Acid has been associated with so many health problems**, it is helpful to learn about *natural* Glutamic Acid. Glutamic Acid is an amino acid (a building block of protein) that occurs *naturally* in the body as one of many excitatory neurotransmitters (chemicals that "excite" cells into action). Glutamic Acid occurs *naturally* in certain *unprocessed*, whole foods (e.g., tomatoes). In this *natural* form, it is bound (i.e., linked) together with other amino acids to form a protein. Once ingested, the protein is broken down *slowly* by the digestive system. The Glutamic Acid is released *gradually* into the blood stream and is non-toxic. If one ingests more glutamate than the body needs, the cells clear away the excess just as they were designed to do. The digestion of these *natural*, whole food sources releases into the bloodstream such a small amount of Glutamic Acid that even people who react to *processed* MSG (i.e., “free glutamic acid”) can usually tolerate them.

When food manufacturers break down a protein during processing (usually from corn, soy, wheat, tapioca starch, molasses or beet sugar), Glutamic Acid is "freed" from the links that bind it to other amino acids in nature. **MSG (i.e., “monosodium glutamate”)** and dozens of other ingredients used by the food industry contain this *free* form of glutamate. When one ingests this already-broken-down, *free* form of glutamate, blood levels of glutamate can spike to more than 20 times the usual amount because the digestive system does not have to work to break down the links. The human nervous system is not equipped to handle such quickly-absorbed doses. The excess glutamate cannot be efficiently cleared away, so it accumulates around the cells throughout the body, over-exciting them to the point of damage or death.

This disruption at the cellular level causes and exacerbates a wide range of physiological reactions from runny noses to heart palpitations. According to experts like Dr. Russell Blaylock, M.D., **Free Glutamic Acid is an excitotoxin, not an allergen**. Some people are more sensitive to lower dosages than others, but it affects everyone to *some* degree. There is often a delay between ingestion and the onset of symptoms, preventing many people from realizing the connection between their symptoms and their diet. Most acute symptoms will display within 48 hours (many within 30 minutes) of ingestion, but some health effects (e.g., obesity, infertility) have been demonstrated in lab mice *long* after exposure.

Processed free glutamate over-stimulates our taste buds, tricking us into thinking that these foods are extremely flavorful. Because glutamate receptors line various organs and tissues (brain, heart, lungs, digestive tract, etc.) throughout the body, ingesting free glutamate can over-stimulate *any* of these systems and cause a **variety of symptoms**. Luckily, much of this damage is reversible, and many sufferers resolve their symptoms (often within 7-10 days) by *completely* eliminating Free Glutamic Acid from their diets.

To prevent these effects and to avoid this hidden additive, one must carefully scrutinize the ingredients list on every item one consumes and avoid any mysterious or vague ingredients on product labels. It is best to prepare meals at home from basic, whole food ingredients and to minimize reliance on processed foods. Many hidden sources of MSG in our food supply are listed on the following pages. These ingredients contain free glutamate in varying amounts. This is not intended to be an *exhaustive* list because the list is continually expanding as food companies realize that consumers are catching on to their tactics.

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MSG (“Monosodium Glutamate”) & Its Hidden Sources (cont.)

Please don't become overwhelmed by reading this list. There are still *plenty* of healthy food options for you to eat; you'll just need to prepare most of them at home. And, with the aid of my recipes and this shopping guide, your transition will surely be a lot smoother than *mine* was! ☺

- **“All Natural” Products** – The label “All Natural” is not a regulated term, so MSG-filled products are allowed to make this claim on the front of their packages. Don't be fooled by claims on the front label of *anything* you consume; *always* check the ingredients list on the *back* of the package!
- **Annatto** – This ingredient is extracted from the seeds of the achiote tree. Therefore, it is a “*natural* color,” and products containing it may be labeled as “*natural*” (which, again, isn't a regulated term, anyway). Annatto is commonly used to give cheddar cheese and butter a yellow/orange color, and it is also added to ice cream and other products, as well. But just because something is “*natural*,” that does not mean it is *safe*. In fact, annatto has been linked to allergic reactions and irritable bowel symptoms in sensitive individuals. Some folks also report MSG-like reactions to annatto and suspect that [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76) may be released during the processing of this ingredient.
- **Aspartame** – Aspartame is an artificial sweetener that exhibits similar neurotoxic effects in the body as MSG. Artificial sweeteners are commonly found in diet drinks, chewing gum, vitamins, mints, diet bars, sugar-free items, etc. I recommend everyone avoid *all* artificial sweeteners.
- **Autolyzed Yeast (or Extract)** – This is not the same thing as yeast! This ingredient is a flavor enhancer that contains [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76). Autolyzed yeast is added to a variety of products including chips, soups, processed vegetarian foods, etc.
- **Baby Formula** – Read the label on many commercially-prepared baby formulas, and you'll find plenty of these hidden sources of MSG listed!
- **Barley Malt** – This ingredient contains [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76). It is very commonly added to baking flours to enhance the color and flavor of cereals and baked goods (even “*bakery-fresh*” breads). It is also added to most of the “All Purpose” flours you'll find at the grocery store. Look for plain, [unbleached white flour](#) (p. 91), instead, when purchasing flour for your own baking. It's more expensive and not all stores carry it. It is generally available at natural food stores or in the health food section at regular grocery stores; and it does *not* contain barley malt.
- **Beverages** – Many juices, flavored drinks and sodas contain hidden MSG in the form of color and/or flavor enhancers or preservatives like “[caramel color](#)” (*see below*), “[natural flavor](#)” (p. 80), and “[citric acid](#)” (p. 78). Save yourself the trouble, and just drink water! If you'd like to drink tea, please read the “[Tea](#)” section (p. 90) of this guide for more information.
- **Bouillon** – I have never found a commercially-prepared [bouillon](#) (p. 59) that doesn't contain *at least* one potential source of hidden MSG.
- **Broth** – Many brands available at grocery stores contain vague words like “[spices](#)” (p. 81) or “[flavor](#)” (p. 78) or MSG-containing ingredients like “[autolyzed yeast](#)” (*see above*) in their ingredients list, so be sure to check the label. It's cheap and easy to make your own broth at home; and it tastes *much* better, too! We often freeze or can our homemade broth (p. 33) to preserve it for future convenient use. Some folks who are *extremely* sensitive to [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76) may experience reactions even to *homemade* broths because, when exposed to lengthy cooking times, protein-rich foods (like meat) are broken down and more free glutamate is released than these folks can handle. Such individuals are advised not to allow meats, beans or glutamate-rich vegetables (e.g., tomatoes) to simmer any longer than necessary.
- **Calcium Caseinate** – This ingredient may contain [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76) as a by-product of the breakdown of the milk protein during processing. It's often found in unlikely places like canned tuna!
- **Caramel Coloring or Flavoring** – This ingredient sometimes contains [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76) as a by-product of processing. It's often added to beverages, cheap soy sauce, balsamic vinegar, etc.

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MSG (“Monosodium Glutamate”) & Its Hidden Sources (cont.)

- **Carrageenan** – This inflammatory ingredient is added to products for thickening purposes. It is especially common in dairy products (cottage cheese, sour cream, whipping cream, flavored milks, etc.). It contains [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76) because it’s processed from seaweed which is naturally rich in glutamate. It is also frequently found in toothpaste, and it can contribute to gum sensitivity.
- **Chewing Gum** – Most chewing gums (even “natural” brands) contain problematic ingredients such as “[natural flavors](#)” (p. 80), “[aspartame](#)” (p. 77) and other artificial sweeteners - even when the gum is *not* a “sugar-free” variety! Although chewing gum is not something you *swallow*, these additives are still absorbed into your bloodstream. And don’t overlook breath mints, either. Many of them contain these *same* problematic ingredients, as well!
- **Citric Acid** – This additive may cause no problems when it’s derived from citrus fruit, but that is rarely the case. Citric acid is usually derived from corn (using [hydrolysis](#) – p. 79), so it may contain free glutamate residue from the processing of the corn protein. It is often used as a preservative in canned tomato products, soups, etc.
- **Corn Syrup and Corn Syrup Solids** – These ingredients are corn derivatives, so [free glutamate](#) (p. 76) may be present as a by-product of the processing.
- **Cornstarch** – This ingredient is a corn derivative, so [free glutamate](#) (p. 76) may be present as a by-product of the processing. It is added to baking powder, powdered sugar, etc.
- **Dextrose** – This ingredient is a corn derivative, so [free glutamate](#) (p. 76) may be present as a by-product of the processing.
- **Dry Milk Solids** – This ingredient may contain [free glutamate](#) (p. 76) as a by-product of processing. It is frequently added to cheese and other skim-milk products.
- **Enriched or Vitamin-Enriched products** – Refined flour products (e.g., white bread, [white pasta](#), [white flour](#), and cereals), [white rice](#), milk, fruit juices, etc. are often *enriched* with synthetic vitamins and minerals. The binders (e.g., cornstarch – *see above*) that are used during the enrichment process sometimes contain [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76).
- **Enzyme-Modified (anything)** – Enzymes are used to break down proteins; so when they are included in an ingredients list, there is a good chance that [free glutamate](#) (p. 76) is present in the product as a “side effect” of this break-down process.
- **Fermented (anything)** – The fermentation process releases free amino acids. Anytime a fermented ingredient is listed on a product label, there’s a good chance that [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76) is present in the product as a “side effect” of this process.
- **Flavors, Flavoring, Natural Flavor, Artificial Flavor** – These ingredients are vague and *may* contain [free glutamate](#) (p. 76). If you wish to eat the product, you should contact the manufacturer directly to determine whether or not their “flavor/flavoring” contains any “[free glutamic acid](#).” Do not ask if it contains “MSG” because they can tell you “no” as long as it contains no “pure MSG,” and the item could still contain *other* sources of [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76). In my household, we choose to avoid ingredients like these regardless of a manufacturer’s response.
- **Flour** – There are two potential problems with flour. If it is refined white flour (i.e., not whole grain), it may be [enriched](#) (*see above*); and products added during the enrichment process sometimes contain [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76). Secondly, if the flour contains “[malted barley](#) flour” (p. 79), as is often the case with All Purpose and other baking flours, that’s another source of [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76). Check the ingredients list when you buy flour, and read the “[Unbleached White Flour](#)” (p. 91) and “[Whole-Wheat Flour](#)” (p. 93) sections of this guide for my *specific* recommendations. Also, if you purchase a prepared food item that lists “flour” in *its* ingredients list, you will have no way to know which of these types of flour was used (and, thus, the potential free glutamate content) without contacting the manufacturer directly.

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MSG (“Monosodium Glutamate”) & Its Hidden Sources (cont.)

- **Flowing Agents** – Additives are commonly added to salt and seasoning mixes (e.g., chili powder) to keep the spice granules from caking together. Some of these agents (e.g., [cornstarch](#) – p. 78) may contain [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76), so it’s best to avoid them.
- **Garlic Salt** – Be sure to read the ingredients lists on *every* spice you purchase. Garlic salt, for example, often contains all sorts of flavor enhancers and flowing agents (see above); not just “garlic” and “salt” like you may assume! Look for brands that contain *only* these two ingredients or purchase [garlic granules](#) (p. 69) and [salt](#) (p. 87) *separately*, instead.
- **Gelatin** – This ingredient is generally derived from animal bones/tendons/skins/etc. These sources are all very rich in *natural, bound* glutamate, which becomes [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76) during processing. Gelatin is used in gelatin desserts, gummy candies, vitamins, medicinal capsules, etc.
- **Guar Gum & other vegetable gums** – These ingredients are used as fat substitutes and stabilizers in salad dressings and other condiments, cream cheese and non-dairy milks (e.g., coconut milk). Although they are created from *natural* plants (e.g., guar beans), they may contain [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76) as a by-product of processing. These gums may cause gastrointestinal discomfort and other symptoms.
- **High Fructose Corn Syrup** – (see “[Corn Syrup](#)” – p. 78)
- **Hydrolysis (Hydrolyzed Plant/Vegetable Proteins: corn, soy, wheat, oat, gluten)** – The hydrolysis process releases [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76) when it is used to break down protein-rich foods such as corn, soy or wheat.
- **L-cysteine** – This ingredient is another **excitotoxin** that affects our bodies in similar ways as [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76). It is primarily found in baked goods, and it’s frequently used in tortillas.
- **Lecithin and Soy Lecithin** – This ingredient is often made from hydrolyzed soy (*see above*), and [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76) may be present as a by-product of this processing method. This ingredient improves the texture of candies, chocolate bars, chocolate chips, etc. It is used in countless other foods, as well.
- **Liquid Malt** – This ingredient is sometimes added to baked goods to enhance the color and flavor. (See “[Barley Malt](#)” – p. 77)
- **“Low Fat” or “No Fat” items** - Fat is responsible for much of the flavor of food. When manufacturers reduce or eliminate fat in their products, they must add other ingredients to enhance the flavor and make it palatable. Often this is done by adding hidden sources of MSG (p. 76).
- **Malted Barley (Flour), Malt Extract, Malt Syrup** – (see “[Barley Malt](#)” – p. 77)
- **Maltodextrin** – This ingredient is a corn derivative, so [free glutamate](#) (p. 76) may be present as a by-product of the processing.
- **Milk Powder** – This ingredient may contain [free glutamate](#) (p. 76) as a by-product of processing.
- **Modified Food Starch** – This additive is made from soy, potatoes, whey or corn; and it may contain [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76) as a result of processing. This ingredient is used as a fat substitute in “reduced-fat” products and is also used to stabilize and thicken a variety of prepared foods (e.g., desserts, sauces, and salad dressings).
- **Molasses** – Molasses is extracted from sugar cane or sugar beets, and it is *naturally* rich in *unprocessed, bound* glutamate (see page 76). Consumers who are highly sensitive to glutamate may experience symptoms from eating natural molasses. Because molasses is naturally rich in glutamate, it is often used by the food industry to produce the *processed* toxic form of glutamate (p. 76) that is used as a flavor enhancer in many foods. Some consumers won’t experience reactions to molasses as long as the molasses is “unsulfured.” Molasses is “sulphured” (i.e., contains “[sulfites](#)” – p. 89) unless it is specifically *labeled* as “unsulphured,” so read labels carefully. [Sulfur dioxide](#) is often used during the processing of molasses to lighten its color and extend its shelf life. If you are sensitive to sulfites and/or molasses, please be aware that even if you don’t purchase molasses *directly*, it is often added to other foods (e.g., brown sugar) to add color and/or flavor. Always check ingredient lists!

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MSG (“Monosodium Glutamate”) & Its Hidden Sources (cont.)

- **Monosodium Glutamate (MSG)** – This ingredient is *pure* MSG, and it contains about 78% [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76) – the highest percentage contained in *any* ingredient on the market! MSG is often made by processing corn, wheat starch, tapioca starch, molasses or beet sugar in such a way that the natural *bound* glutamates in these foods are released as [free glutamic acid](#). Pure MSG is found in many products, such as dry seasonings, soups, flavored potato chips, etc. Remember, though, “free glutamic acid” is what makes MSG problematic. If you wish to *fully* escape its effects, you must avoid as many of the sources of processed free glutamate listed here as possible.
- **“MSG-Free”** – Products labeled as “MSG-Free” on the front label are claiming not to contain *pure* “Monosodium Glutamate” (see above). However, these foods may contain *any* number of the other *hidden* sources of [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76) listed here. So always judge products by their ingredients lists, *not* by the claims on their front labels!
- **Natural Flavors (or “Flavoring”)** – If you find this ingredient on a product, it may or may not contain [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76). The FDA permits “[autolyzed yeast](#)” (p. 77) and “[hydrolyzed protein](#)” (p. 79) to be labeled as “natural flavors” on product labels. Some “natural flavors” are actually *natural flavors* like essential oils (e.g., peppermint oil). In such cases, the words “natural flavor” may simply be used to protect the proprietary formula of a product. If you wish to eat the product, you should contact the manufacturer directly to determine whether or not their “flavor/flavoring” contains any “[free glutamic acid](#)” (p. 76). Do *not* ask if it contains “MSG” because they can tell you “no” as long as it contains no “pure MSG,” and the item could still contain *other* sources of [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76).
- **“No MSG”** – Products labeled as containing “No MSG” are claiming not to contain *pure* “Monosodium Glutamate” (see above). This label does not guarantee that no *other* sources of [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76) are added to a product. So always judge products by their ingredients lists, *not* by the claims on their front labels!
- **“No MSG Added”** – [Free glutamic acid](#) (the problematic component of MSG – p. 76) is often generated as a *side effect* of processing and, thus, it is not technically “*added*” to products in these cases. Also, products sometimes claim “No MSG Added” on their front label even when they contain *other* possible sources of [free glutamic acid](#) such as cornstarch, meat broth, fermented ingredients, etc. “No MSG Added” does *not* guarantee that no *other* sources of free glutamic acid (besides *pure* MSG) are added to a product. So always judge products by their ingredients lists, *not* by the claims on their front labels!
- **Nuts** – See the “[Nuts](#)” section on page 83 for details and my specific recommendations.
- **Oils** – Some cooking oils contain [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76) residue, especially if the plant they are derived from is naturally high in glutamate (e.g., corn, soy, peanut, and sunflower). High temperatures are used to create such oils, and the heat breaks down the proteins and releases free glutamate in the product. Free glutamate remains in the oils as a result of processing. Avoid purchasing such oils or any products that contain them (e.g., most snack chips). It is best to stick with butter, olive oil, coconut oil and/or lard for all of your cooking needs.
- **Pectin** – This ingredient is often used as a gelling agent in jellies, jams, “gummy” candies, vitamins, etc. It *may* contain [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76).
- **Protein (corn, wheat, rice, oat, soy, or whey)** – The process used to isolate the protein in these foods releases [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76). This includes the “protein” ingredients used in weight-loss drinks, protein shakes, baby formulas, etc.
- **Protein-Fortified (anything)** – (See “[Protein](#)” section - above) Milk is one example of a food that is sometimes protein-fortified. (See also “[dry milk solids](#)” – p. 78)
- **Rice Syrup or Brown Rice Syrup** – This ingredient may contain [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76) as a result of processing. It is used as a “natural” sweetener, especially in products sold at many health food stores (e.g., cereals, snack bars).

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MSG (“Monosodium Glutamate”) & Its Hidden Sources (cont.)

- **Salad** – Salad mixes that are pre-washed at the factory may be rinsed in a [citric acid](#) (p. 78) solution which causes MSG reactions in some folks. The best option is to purchase *whole* heads of lettuce and cut and wash them yourself.
- **Salt** – Regular table salt, any *iodized* salt, and even many *sea* salts contain [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76) in the anti-caking agents and iodine carriers they contain (e.g., cornstarch, dextrose, yellow prussiate of soda). Look for brands of salt in which the *only* ingredient listed is “salt.” See the “[Salt](#)” section on page 87 for more details.
- **Smoke Flavor (Flavoring)** – This ingredient may contain [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76) or pure MSG. It is often added to marinades, sauces (e.g., BBQ), packaged meats, etc.
- **Soy Lecithin** – This ingredient is often made from [hydrolyzed](#) (p. 79) soy, so [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76) may be present as a by-product of this processing method. This ingredient improves the texture of candies, chocolate bars, chocolate chips, etc. And it’s used in countless other foods, as well.
- **Soy Protein (Concentrate/Isolate)** – This ingredient is used to boost the protein content and/or flavor of foods, and it contains [free glutamate](#) (p. 76) as a result of breaking down the soy protein into amino acids. It is often used in protein bars/shakes, prepared vegetarian foods, etc.
- **Soy Sauce or Extract** – Some folks are sensitive to soy sauce in *any* amount because the process of fermenting protein-rich soy beans releases [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76). Cheaper brands are even worse because they usually contain *additional* hidden sources of MSG and caramel coloring, as well!
- **“Spices” & “Seasonings”** – Do not assume that these words on an ingredients list are short-hand for a blend of dry herbs and spices. Sometimes that *is* the case, and sometimes it’s *not*. These words are used to disguise [pure MSG](#) (p. 80) in some meat products. In other foods, these designations may disguise other hidden sources of [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76).
- **Stevia** – Stevia is a great no-calorie, natural sweetener. Look for it in its natural form without any added ingredients. Ask an associate at your local natural health store to be sure you’re purchasing the appropriate form. Many companies are producing altered versions of this sweetener to which they add [maltodextrin](#) (p. 79) and other sources of [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76).
- **Stock** – (see “[Broth](#)” – p. 77)
- **Tea (including bags and loose leaf teas that you brew yourself!)** – Many “flavored” teas contain ingredients like “[natural flavors](#)” (p. 80), which can disguise [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76). Often within a *particular* brand, some flavors will contain just pure tea and other flavors will contain additives; so check *every* label. Many teas are flavored with *herbs* (e.g., Chamomile) which are fine. If you are unsure whether an ingredient is an herb or an additive, a quick Internet search is helpful. An associate at your local natural foods store or specialty tea shop would be a good resource, as well.
- **Tomatoes and Tomato Products** – Tomatoes are naturally high in *bound* glutamate (p. 76). Folks who are sensitive to glutamate should not cook tomatoes any longer than necessary. Canned tomato products (diced tomatoes, tomato sauce, etc.) often contain [citric acid](#) (p. 78), as well, which may contain [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76). Tomato paste often does *not* contain citric acid, and it’s relatively easy to find a brand at any store that contains only “tomatoes.” See the “[Tomato Products](#)” section on page 90 for my specific suggestions regarding canned tomato products.
- **Tooth Products** – Some toothpastes and mouthwashes contain ingredients that will cause MSG-reactions for some people. Such ingredients include [aspartame](#) (p. 77), [natural flavor](#) (p. 80) and [carrageenan](#) (p. 78). I personally suffered from sensitive gums until learning that carrageenan is inflammatory and switching toothpastes.
- **Torula Yeast** – This ingredient contains high levels of [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76). It’s used as a flavor enhancer in many snack foods, seasoning mixes, crackers, etc. (even those advertised as “natural”).

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MSG (“Monosodium Glutamate”) & Its Hidden Sources (cont.)

- **Ultra-Pasteurized (anything)** – The process of ultra pasteurization exposes foods to very high heat levels to extend shelf life. Unfortunately, such high temperatures also break down any proteins that are present into amino acids, like [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76). Organic dairy products are frequently ultra-pasteurized. Most non-dairy milks are also ultra-pasteurized.
- **Vinegar** – Because white vinegar is distilled from glutamate-rich corn, [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76) may be present. A better choice is [apple cider vinegar](#) (see p. 59).
- **Vitamins and Medications** - Many contain inactive ingredients, such as [cornstarch](#) (p. 78) and [dextrose](#) (p. 78), which are forms of [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76). Many also contain other additives, binders and artificial sweeteners. I am *not* dispensing medical advice regarding any supplements. I’m simply advising you to check the ingredients lists for unwanted additives in these items. Always consult with a medical professional. A friend of mine was taking fish oil capsules because she heard fish oil was good for the heart. She started to experience “racing heart” symptoms only to discover that she was reacting to the “gelatin” used as one of the inactive ingredients in the fish oil capsules. Animal [gelatin](#) (p. 79) is comprised of over 11% [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76)!
- **Whey** – Whey is a by-product of cheese making, and it is high in protein. When it is processed into a powdered form, these proteins are broken down and [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76) is released. This powder is then added to processed foods like ice cream, protein powders/drinks/bars, candy, etc.
- **Xanthan Gum** – This ingredient is used frequently as a thickening agent and stabilizer in cream cheese, non-dairy milks (e.g., coconut milk), salad dressings, sauces and gluten-free baked goods. It is created through a fermentation process involving bacteria and a sugar source (generally from corn, soy, wheat or dairy). [Free glutamate](#) (p. 76) is released during the fermentation process used to create this ingredient.
- **Yeast** – Because fermentation of molasses is involved in the manufacturing of yeast, most yeast products contain some amount of [free glutamate](#) (p. 76). You’ll need to determine for yourself whether or not this small amount of free glutamate causes reactions for you and adjust the amount of yeast-containing foods in your diet accordingly. At the very least, select a brand of yeast that contains no *other* additives or ingredients (e.g., [Rapunzel](#) brand).
- **Yeast Extract** – This ingredient is *not* the same as yeast; it is a flavor enhancer created by processing yeast in a way that releases [free glutamate](#) (p. 76). This ingredient is commonly found in processed vegetarian foods, etc.
- **Yogurt** - Many varieties (especially *flavored* varieties) contain sources of [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76). See the “[Yogurt](#)” section on page 93 for my *specific* recommendations about yogurt selection.

Mustard

Avoid brands containing “[natural flavor](#)” (p. 80) or “[spices](#)” (p. 81). In Omaha, NE, the only additive-free brand I’ve found is [Annie’s Naturals](#) brand, which is available at natural food stores (e.g., Whole Foods Market) and [online](#). This brand’s Dijon and yellow mustard varieties are both good, additive-free choices. For example, the Dijon variety contains: “organic distilled white vinegar, water, organic mustard seed, salt, and organic clove.” *White* vinegar is a common ingredient in mustard. Because it is distilled from glutamate-rich *corn*, [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76) may be present in *any* brand of mustard that contains *white* vinegar. I have never personally experienced a reaction from eating commercial condiments, however. Because white vinegar is made from corn, it is also a possible source of [genetically-modified organisms \(GMOs\)](#) (p. 69) unless it is “certified organic” or “non-GMO verified.”

Noodles – (see “[Pasta](#)” – p. 84)

Nutmeg (ground)

This is a dry spice (seasoning) located in the spice/baking section of any grocery store. I have never personally seen any additives in this product.

Nuts

Whether you're purchasing nuts for *snacking* or for *baking*, always look for brands that contain nothing more than "nuts" or, at the most, "nuts and salt." Some nuts have an entire *paragraph* of ingredients that you'd never suspect, so always turn the package around and read the ingredients list! As always, IGNORE claims on the *front* of any package such as, "Natural," "No MSG," "Made with Sea Salt," etc. It is not uncommon to find nuts with such claims that also contain [MSG](#) (p. 76) and other additives. And *definitely* don't assume that just because it says "unsalted" on the front, that there are no *other* ingredients lurking in there! Sometimes, the *unsalted* varieties are the *worst* culprits!

Look for raw or dry roasted nuts, and avoid those containing any kind of oil. Unfortunately, not all stores carry nuts that meet these criteria. Sometimes, you may need to look beyond the snack aisle and check the *baking* aisle of your grocery store for unsalted/unseasoned nuts. Generally, you'll at least find pecans and walnuts in the baking aisle that contain nothing but nuts! The Costco store in Omaha, NE sells additive-free pecans, walnuts and almonds at one of the lowest prices in town. They are not *certified organic*, however.

Another place to check for *plain* nuts is in the bulk bins at your grocery store. If you're not familiar with this section of your store, ask an associate if the store has a "bulk bin" section. These are bins filled with all sorts of non-prepackaged dry goods (e.g., nuts, flours) from which you can scoop *just* the quantity you *need*. The ingredients should be listed on the bins, so be sure to inspect what's listed before making your final selection!

Oats

There are 3 varieties of oats used in my recipes. **Steel-cut oats** are the least processed variety. They take the longest to cook, but they retain their texture which is great for making hot breakfast cereal! **Old fashioned oats** (also known as "rolled oats") are steamed and pressed during processing. This results in a thinner oat that cooks more quickly. Old fashioned oats are great for making breakfast cereal, as well as granola and cookie recipes! They retain much of their shape and texture when cooked. **Quick oats** are pressed during processing to be thinner than old fashioned oats. They cook even more quickly, but they tend to lose their shape and have a "mushier" texture. If my recipe specifies *which* variety to use, be sure to use *that* variety. For example, when making meatloaf, quick oats work best. *Quaker* is a popular brand of oats that's available at most grocery stores, but generic and store brands work just as well. Most natural food stores and health sections will also carry *organic* oat varieties, and these are usually available in the bulk bins and/or cereal aisles of those stores.

Old Fashioned Oats – (see "[Oats](#)" above)

Olive Oil

The only ingredient on the label should be "olive oil," and olive oil is widely available at any grocery store. We prefer "*extra virgin*" varieties of olive oil because they are higher quality oils with greater health benefits. For example, extra virgin varieties provide superior anti-inflammatory effects compared to more refined varieties of olive oil. Inspect the label to make sure the ingredients indicate that the oil is 100% pure "*extra virgin*" olive oil. Also, the flavor of extra virgin olive oil varies significantly across brands, so you may need to experiment with a few different brands until you find one you like best. Lastly, as a general rule, avoid any "flavored" varieties (e.g., "garlic olive oil"), as these may contain additives.

Onion Granules

This is a dry spice (seasoning) located in the spice/baking section of any grocery store. I have never seen any additives in this product. Onion *granules* are often labeled as "*onion powder*." *True* onion *powder* is the consistency of [flour](#), and onion *granules* are closer to the consistency of [salt](#). If you cannot find onion *granules* at your grocery store, peek through the sides of the onion *powder* containers, and select one that looks coarser than flour. That will work just fine. If all you can find is true onion *powder* (with a [flour](#) consistency), then substitute that *powder* at a rate of half the amount called for with the *granules*.

Orange Juice – (see "[Juice](#)" – p. 71)

Paprika

This is a dry spice (seasoning) located in the spice/baking section of any grocery store. I have never personally seen any additives in this product.

Parmesan Cheese – (see “[Cheese](#)” – p. 63)

Pasta

When possible, choose whole-wheat pasta or gluten-free brown rice pasta. The only ingredient in whole-wheat pasta should be “whole-wheat flour,” and the only ingredients in brown rice pasta should be “brown rice and water.” Regular *white* pasta is generally made from “[enriched](#)” (p. 78) white flour, which may contain [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76). When you purchase *egg noodles*, select a brand that contains only “wheat flour and eggs.” If you can’t find a brand that meets those criteria, you can substitute another type of pasta (e.g., rotini) in my recipes or find recipes online for making your own egg noodles from scratch!

Peanut Butter

You may assume that peanut butter is a health food and that it is made from *just* peanuts. In many cases, you’d be wrong! Many common commercial brands contain unnecessary ingredients like sugar, high fructose corn syrup, salt, and partially-hydrogenated vegetable oil (i.e., trans fat)!

Ideally, purchase brands that are unsalted and contain just *one* ingredient: “dry roasted peanuts.” Many regular grocery stores may not carry plain, unsalted peanut butter; so you may need access to a natural food store like Whole Foods Market which carries several choices (e.g., “365 brand”). Many stores now carry at least *one* brand that contains only “peanuts and salt.” For example, Costco’s **Kirkland organic** brand (creamy) peanut butter and [Smucker’s Natural](#) brand peanut butter both contain just “peanuts and salt;” and **Smucker’s** brand is available in creamy or chunky varieties at many regular grocery stores.

Because these natural varieties of peanut butter contain no additives, the peanut oil will settle to the top of the jar; so you’ll need to stir it well before using it the first time. Peanut butter that you may be accustomed to likely contains hydrogenated oil (i.e., trans fat), which is added to keep the fat from separating in this manner. Natural peanut butter should be stored in the *refrigerator* to preserve freshness after opening. Refrigeration will also prevent the oil from settling back to the top, so you won’t need to stir it again after the first use. Also note, natural peanut butter is a bit *sticky*, so don’t put too much in your mouth at once! ☺

Pecans – (see “[Nuts](#)” – p. 83)

Popcorn (Kernels)

Popcorn kernels are available at most regular grocery stores in the snack aisle. To avoid unhealthy oils and other additives, it is best to pop your *own* popcorn from *scratch*. Air poppers are a great tool for making popcorn, and they are available at most department stores and kitchen supply stores (or online) for under \$30. Although much of the corn grown in the U.S. contains [genetically-modified organisms \(GMOs\)](#) (p. 69), it is unlikely that *popcorn* is genetically-modified (according to sources at [ResponsibleTechnology.org](#)). The best way to make *sure* you’re avoiding GMOs, though, is to *only* purchase corn products that are labeled as “certified organic” or “non-GMO verified.”

Powdered Sugar

Store-bought powdered sugar commonly contains “sugar” and “cornstarch.” If you are extremely sensitive to [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76), you may want to avoid [cornstarch](#) (p. 78) by making your *own* powdered sugar at home. Simply place 1 cup of white sugar in a blender and process until powdered. If you own a high-powered blender like a VitaMix or BlendTec, you will achieve a *better* texture; but it can be made well enough in a regular blender if that’s your only option.

Provolone Cheese – (see “[Cheese](#)” – p. 63)

Pumpkin Puree

It is okay to use canned pumpkin rather than homemade puree, but make sure the canned pumpkin is *unflavored*. The only ingredient on the label should be “pumpkin.” The pumpkin recipes in my cookbook include all of the seasonings you’ll need, so you don’t want to “double up” the spices by purchasing *flavored* pumpkin puree! Flavored pumpkin puree is not necessarily filled with additives, though, so if you’d like to purchase it for *other* recipes that you make, just be sure to review the ingredients label closely.

Quick Oats – (see “[Oats](#)” – p. 83)

Quinoa (“Keen-wah”)

This is a high protein, gluten-free grain that is used in similar ways as rice. It’s sold in natural food stores or health food sections and online. In Omaha, NE, large bags of organic quinoa are sold at Costco for the cheapest price I’ve seen in town! Some Wal-Mart stores also carry quinoa.

Raisins

I’ve seen some brands that contain oil (e.g., “sunflower oil”), but most don’t contain anything except “raisins.” Just double-check the ingredients label on whichever raisins you purchase.

Raw Honey

Some brands contain *corn syrup*, so always read the ingredients label! Most honey you find in the baking aisle of your regular grocery store is also *heated* (i.e., pasteurized) and *pourable* (e.g., the honey bears we’re all familiar with). In contrast, “**raw honey**” has *not* been heated and is generally thicker, less clear, and must be *scooped* out of the container rather than squeezed/poured. Heating honey destroys its natural health benefits (enzymes, vitamins, etc.). If you’re not familiar with the *many* health benefits of raw honey, do an Internet search for “health benefits of raw honey.”

Raw honey is most likely found at your local farmers market, natural food store or health section of your regular grocery store. Make sure the container says “raw, never heated.” Otherwise, it has likely been heated. In the Omaha, NE area, the company [It’s All About Bees](#) sells truly raw (never heated) varieties of honey. They operate a store in Ralston, NE; and their honey is also available in the Omaha area at Whole Foods Market, [Jane’s Health Market](#) in Benson, and [Tomato Tomato](#) in Millard.

Red Pepper Flakes

This is a dry spice (seasoning) located in the spice/baking section of any grocery store. I have never personally seen any additives in this product.

Red Wine Vinegar – (see “[Vinegar](#)” – p. 92)

Refried Beans

Look for a brand with minimal ingredients like *Hy-Vee Organic* brand (in Omaha, NE), which contains: “certified organic pinto beans, water, and sea salt.” This brand is located in the “Health Section” at Hy-Vee stores in Omaha, NE. Natural food stores also carry additive-free varieties. Sometimes regular grocery stores offer additive-free varieties, as well, but they are often located in the “ethnic foods” section and not in the regular bean section of the store.

Rice

Most regular grocery stores now carry at least *one* variety of brown rice. Rice is *brown* unless it is processed and the bran is removed to *make* it white. We generally choose to prepare *brown* rice at our house because it is more nutritious. Brown rice does tend to have a “mushier” texture, so I recommend adding about 20% *less* water than called for on the package instructions. I’ve also found that I prefer the texture of **long-grain** brown rice varieties, such as Basmati or Jasmine, because they seem firmer to me. These varieties are more expensive and are not always available at regular grocery stores, so you may need to visit a natural foods store or order them online.

You won’t find an ingredients list on (unflavored) varieties of white rice or brown rice, but the FDA does require U.S. food suppliers to “enrich” (i.e., add nutrients to) white rice because the nutrients are stripped away when it is processed. If you are trying to avoid MSG ([free glutamic acid](#) – p. 76), you may want to avoid white rice because the binders (e.g., [cornstarch](#) – p. 78) that are added during the enrichment process sometimes contain [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76). If you *must* use white rice, either select imported varieties that are *not* enriched (available at some ethnic specialty stores) or rinse it very well before cooking it to get rid of as much of the binders as possible.

Roast - (see “[Meat](#)” – p. 72)

Salad Dressing

If you’re the type of person who smothers everything you eat with store-bought Ranch dressing, then you might want to close your eyes for this...there are tons of additives and unhealthy oils in there! I have yet to find *any* commercially-prepared salad dressings that contain *no* suspicious ingredients. Even the “cleanest” brands I’ve seen at the store contain highly-processed oils and/or “[xanthan gum](#)” (p. 82) which may cause physical reactions for folks who are highly sensitive to [MSG](#) (p. 76). The good news is that it’s quick and easy to make your *own* dressings! They taste better than store-bought varieties, and there are several recipes included on page 35 of this book!

Salmon – (see “[Seafood](#)” – p. 87)

Salsa

Many commercial salsa varieties contain problematic ingredients such as, “[natural flavor](#)” (p. 80), “[citric acid](#)” (p. 78), etc. Carefully inspect the ingredients list because there *are* some good brands available; and they are great to have on hand as a short-cut! (Many varieties are loaded with sodium, though, so use sparingly!) *Kirkland* brand organic salsa (available only at Costco), for example, is additive-free and contains only: “organic tomatoes, organic jalapeno peppers, organic onions, water, organic tomato paste, organic cilantro, sea salt, organic sugar, organic vinegar, organic cumin, organic garlic, organic cayenne pepper.” [Nash Brothers Organic](#) brand salsa also contains no “mysterious” items in its ingredient list, and it’s available in a variety of heat levels (mild/medium/hot). I’ve seen this brand at regular grocery stores in Omaha, NE (e.g., Bag ‘N Save).

If you don’t find *any* additive-free varieties in the salsa aisle, be sure to check the refrigerated cases in your grocer’s deli area. Sometimes they offer freshly-made varieties in that department. Be sure to read the ingredients, though. Just because it’s “fresh,” doesn’t mean it’s free of additives!

Many brands of salsa contain (white) vinegar. Because *white* vinegar is distilled from glutamate-rich *corn*, [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76) may be present in *any* brand of salsa that contains *white* vinegar. I have never personally experienced a glutamate reaction from eating commercial condiments, however. Because white vinegar is made from *corn*, it is also a possible source of [genetically-modified organisms \(GMOs\)](#) (p. 69) unless it is “certified organic” or “non-GMO verified.”

Salt

We prefer **sea salt** that we grind ourselves at home. Whether you purchase regular salt or sea salt, you must check the ingredients list. Yes, even on your *salt*! Salt often contains “anti-caking agents,” such as “[dextrose](#)” (p. 78) or “[cornstarch](#)” (p. 78), to keep it from clumping together in the package. This is true for both iodized *and* non-iodized versions.

I recommend avoiding these additives because many of them contain [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76). I also recommend avoiding *iodized* salt because the iodine *carriers* used in these varieties may contain [free glutamic acid](#), as well, and these carriers *won't* be listed on the ingredients label. It is possible to find brands of salt that do not contain additives, but you may need to shop for them at a natural foods store or the health section of a regular grocery store. Look for brands that are *not* iodized and contain just “salt” in the ingredients list. If you are extremely sensitive to such binders and carriers, then also use caution when purchasing processed foods (e.g., store-bought mustard and ketchup) that contain “salt” because you have no way of knowing whether or not the salt *they* use is iodized or contains anti-caking agents. I am *quite* sensitive to [free glutamic acid](#), and to my knowledge I have never experienced an acute reaction to the small amounts of salt that I consume in prepared foods (e.g., condiments). Of course, do what works best for *you*.

Seafood

Give preference to “wild caught” varieties when you select fish. To be safe, only purchase “unseasoned” varieties, as well. The only thing in the ingredients list should be “fish.” Look for “wild caught” varieties of seafood because otherwise the fish is “farm raised” (i.e., raised in captivity for the sole purpose of consumption). Farm-raised fish may be confined in unnatural and over-crowded enclosures and fed diets that are not compatible with their physiology. As a result, the animals are not as healthy...and neither are we if we eat them! For example, farm-raised salmon must be fed a chemical to turn their flesh pink because in captivity they are denied access to the tiny shrimp that “wild caught” salmon eat to achieve this reddening effect naturally. If farm-raised salmon do not eat this chemical, their flesh remains an unattractive (and not very “salmon-like”) grey color. (See also: “[Canned Tuna/Canned Salmon](#)” – p. 62)

Sea Salt – (see “[Salt](#)” – p. 87)

Sesame Oil

This product should contain only “sesame oil,” and it is available in most grocery stores near the other cooking oils (usually in the baking aisle). Sesame seeds are naturally high in glutamate, so if you are sensitive to processed [free glutamate](#) (p. 76), then you may wish to avoid this oil.

Shrimp – (see “[Seafood](#)” – p. 87)

Snack Bars –

[Larabar](#) brand makes awesome snack bars, and many of their flavors contain only nuts and dried fruit! These bars are typically sold at natural food stores and in the health sections of some regular grocery stores. In Omaha, NE, I've seen these bars at Whole Foods, Hy-Vee, Baker's, Trader Joe's...and even a few flavors at Super Target and Wal-Mart near their pharmacy sections (with the “weight loss” and “protein” bars). Regular prices are usually \$1.25-\$1.75 per bar. These bars are not certified organic, but most varieties are gluten-free, raw, dairy-free, soy-free, vegan and kosher with no added sugar (most are sweetened solely with dates/raisins). My favorite flavors are Cinnamon Roll, Pecan Pie and Cashew Cookie; but they make *many* different flavors. The ingredients for the Cinnamon Roll bar, for example, include just “dates, walnuts, almonds, raisins, cashews and cinnamon.” The Cashew Cookie bar contains only “cashews and dates,” and it's my favorite!

Sour Cream

Because sour cream is a *milk* product, please review the milk section of this guide (p. 74) before you continue reading this sour cream section! Be sure to choose a brand of sour cream that contains only *one* ingredient: “cultured cream.” [Daisy](#) brand is one variety that is readily available. Check the ingredient labels on sour cream containers next time you’re at the store. You’ll be *shocked* by the number of ingredients contained in some brands, especially the “reduced-fat” varieties! Avoid brands that contain: “[cornstarch](#)” (p. 78), “tapioca starch,” “[carrageenan](#)” (p. 78), “locust bean gum,” “[guar gum](#)” (p. 79), “[modified food starch](#)” (p. 79) or any ingredients other than just “cultured cream.” To avoid [genetically-modified organisms \(GMOs\)](#) (p. 69), choose *organic* dairy products, as well, because many conventional dairy cows are administered genetically-modified growth hormones and fed genetically-modified corn and soy.

Soy Sauce

As a result of the soybean fermentation during processing, *all* soy sauce contains “[free glutamic acid](#)” (p. 76). If you are sensitive to free glutamate, you may need to limit or avoid soy sauce in your diet. Also, to avoid [genetically-modified organisms \(GMOs\)](#) (p. 69), be sure to purchase soy products only if they are “certified organic” or “non-GMO verified.”

Select a brand that contains nothing more than: “water, soybeans, salt, wheat, and alcohol (to preserve freshness).” Many brands contain additives like “[caramel color](#)” (p. 77), “[corn syrup](#)” (p. 78), “[natural flavor](#)” (p. 80), “sodium benzoate,” etc. I’ve seen a few additive-free brands at *some* regular grocery stores, but often you may need to purchase a “certified organic” brand or visit a natural food store or health section to find an additive-free variety. Of course, even at natural health stores, you must check the ingredients label to be sure! [SAN-J](#) is one example of an organic, additive-free brand.

Spices (seasonings)

Read the ingredients list carefully on *any* seasonings you own or purchase! Many commercially available spice mixes contain mysterious and/or MSG-filled, flavor-enhancing ingredients like “[hydrolyzed protein](#)” (p. 79), “[maltodextrin](#)” (p. 79), “[dextrose](#)” (p. 78), and “[spice](#)” (p. 81). Some brands *do* list *individual* herbs and spices, which is great as long as they contain *nothing* else. It is often difficult to find additive-free seasoning mixes (e.g., chili powder, taco seasonings), so I included homemade recipes for these blends in my cookbook! Most *individual* spices in your grocer’s baking aisle should be okay (e.g., “dried basil,” “ground cinnamon”), and most of them won’t have an ingredients list because *that* spice is the *only* ingredient in there.

Steak – (see “[Meat](#)” – p. 72)

Stock – (see “[Broth](#)” – p. 61)

Sugars/Sweeteners

- Honey – Some brands contain *corn syrup*, so always read the ingredients label! Most honey you find in the baking aisle of your regular grocery store is also *heated* (i.e., pasteurized) and *pourable* (e.g., the honey bears we’re all familiar with). In contrast, “**raw honey**” has *not* been heated and is generally thicker, less clear, and must be *scooped* out of the container rather than squeezed/poured. Heating honey destroys its natural health benefits (enzymes, vitamins, etc.). If you’re not familiar with the *many* health benefits of raw honey, do an Internet search for “health benefits of raw honey.”

Raw honey is most likely found at your local farmers market, natural food store or health section of your regular grocery store. Make sure the container says “raw, never heated.” Otherwise, it has likely been heated. In the Omaha, NE area, the company [It’s All About Bees](#) sells truly raw (never heated) varieties of honey. They operate a store in Ralston, NE; and their honey is also available in the Omaha area at Whole Foods Market, [Jane’s Health Market](#) in Benson, and [Tomato Tomato](#) in Millard.

(Continued on next page...)

Sugars/Sweeteners (cont.)

- **Maple Syrup** – The *maple-flavored* syrup commonly found on supermarket shelves and in restaurants is actually high fructose **corn** syrup (HFCS) that has been flavored and colored – a far cry from the *real* product which comes from maple *trees*! Check the label, and make sure to buy only *pure maple syrup*. Hint – if it’s the REAL thing, the only ingredient listed will be “maple syrup,” and it will be much more expensive than typical varieties of pancake syrup. When you learn how pure maple syrup is made and that it takes 40-60 gallons of sap to get *each* gallon of syrup, you quickly realize why *real* maple syrup is so much more expensive! Don’t be fooled by products labeled as “syrup” or “pancake syrup” which may contain all sorts of artificial flavors and colors! If it’s “*pure maple syrup*,” it will generally state that on the *front* label, but always double-check the ingredients list, as well!
- **Sugar** – In my recipes, I use the word “sugar” to refer to white, refined (granulated) **cane sugar**. This sweetener is not the best thing for our health, so please enjoy such recipes in *moderation*. Although I do not incorporate white sugar into my diet on a regular basis, I have included in my book several homemade dessert recipes to be used as a first step away from processed foods. After all, making a *homemade* cake with refined white sugar will still help you avoid many *other* additives compared to most *store-bought* cakes. Over time, aim to strictly limit (or eliminate) white sugar from your diet, and only use it when the substitution of a more healthful sweetener (e.g., raw honey) isn’t possible. Also, please be aware that when you see the word “sugar” on an ingredients list of a *processed* food item, the sugar may be sourced from **sugar beets**, *not* **sugar cane**. This is important because, unless they are labeled as “certified organic” or “non-GMO verified,” sugar beets may contain [genetically-modified organisms \(GMOs\)](#) (p. 69). The same is true for **molasses**, which can be extracted from either sugar cane or sugar *beets*.
- **Sugar in the Raw** – (see “**Turbinado**”- below)
- **Turbinado** – Turbinado is *naturally* brown sugar. Most commercially-available “brown sugar” is actually refined *white* cane sugar to which molasses has been added (which changes the flavor and makes it brown). Turbinado is cane sugar from which the *natural* molasses was *never* removed in the first place (as is done when producing refined, *white* cane sugar). In my recipes, I use turbinado instead of typical brown sugar. [Sugar in the Raw](#) is one brand of turbinado that’s generally available at regular grocery stores. In Omaha, NE, Costco carries this brand at the lowest price I’ve seen locally. If you’d like an *organic* variety, you’ll need to shop at a natural food store or health section.

Sulfites

Sulfites are commonly added to foods as a preservative and/or to retain the color of dried fruits, beer, wine, wine vinegars, shredded coconut, etc. Sulfites can provoke asthma, and they’ve been associated with stomach symptoms and respiratory distress in some people.

Tamari

Tamari is a type of soy sauce that is made with less wheat than regular varieties. It can be difficult to find additive-free versions, though, so it may be necessary to visit a natural food store or health section to purchase a “certified organic” brand. [SAN-J](#) is one example of an organic, additive-free brand. It contains only “water, whole organic soybeans, salt, alcohol (to preserve freshness).” This brand also offers a certified “[gluten-free](#)” variety for those who are gluten intolerant.

As a result of the soybean fermentation during processing, *all* tamari contains “[free glutamic acid](#)” (p. 76). If you are sensitive to processed free glutamate, you may want to limit or avoid tamari in your diet. Also, to avoid [genetically-modified organisms \(GMOs\)](#) (p. 69), be sure to purchase soy products only if they are “certified organic” or “non-GMO verified.”

Teas

Many teas (including tea bags and loose leaf tea blends that you brew *yourself*) contain processed additives and flavoring agents like “[natural flavors](#)” (p. 80). Never assume that tea is *just* tea! Be sure to read the ingredients! Buy those which list tea and/or real, individual herbs only!

Thyme

This is a dry spice (seasoning) located in the spice/baking section of any grocery store. I have never personally seen any additives in this product.

Tomato Products (canned)

A surprising number of canned tomato products are *flavored* or *seasoned*. Be sure to purchase the plainest variety you can find. With the exception of tomato paste, you may need to look for canned tomato products at a natural food store or health section. In many recipes, it’s simple to just substitute fresh tomatoes for canned diced or stewed tomatoes. Because tomato paste is so much easier to find than additive-free tomato sauce or juice, I usually just buy the paste and then add enough water to dilute it to the consistency of sauce or juice to suit my recipe. This is also a great way to save money! Otherwise, check ingredient labels when purchasing the following:

- **Diced (or Stewed) Tomatoes** - Many brands at regular grocery stores contain “[citric acid](#)” (p. 78) and “calcium chloride” as preservatives. [Eden Organics](#) at Whole Foods Market in Omaha, NE contains just “Roma tomatoes” (and no salt).
- **Tomato Juice** – Ideally, find a brand that contains just, “tomato juice and salt.” Additive-free varieties are often located in the juice aisle in glass jars intended for use as a beverage. In Omaha, NE, I’ve seen [Dei Fratelli](#) brand available in the regular juice aisle at Hy-Vee. If you can’t find additive-free tomato juice, simply purchase additive-free tomato paste and dilute it with water to create a *juice* consistency. This is a great way to avoid the salt in most tomato juice varieties, too!
- **Tomato Paste** – Many varieties contain a surprising number of ingredients. “[Natural flavor](#)” (p. 80) is commonly added to tomato paste. Look for a brand that contains only “tomatoes.” Often the generic store brands are additive-free!
- **Tomato Sauce** – Many brands contain “[citric acid](#)” (p. 78), so you may need to visit a natural foods store. At Whole Foods Market in Omaha, NE, I’ve found two additive-free brands. [Carmelina](#) brand contains only, “tomato puree.” [Bionaturae](#) (organic) brand contains only “strained tomatoes,” and it’s contained in a glass jar. If you can’t find additive-free tomato sauce, simply purchase additive-free tomato paste and dilute it with water to create a *sauce* consistency.

Tortillas

- **Multi-Grain Tortillas**
[Ezekiel 4:9 Sprouted Grain Tortillas](#) are available at natural food stores and health sections. They are whole-grain, flourless tortillas (by [Food for Life](#) brand) that are 100% organic and available in 2 sizes. They are also *baked*, so there’s no *oil* used in their production! They contain the following (organic) ingredients: “sprouted wheat, filtered water, sesame seeds, sprouted soybeans, sprouted barley, sprouted millet, sprouted lentils, sprouted spelt, and sea salt.” We use the *large* size for our quesadillas and enchiladas (p. 26-27). I’ve even met many *kids* who *prefer* these over *white* tortillas!
- **Corn Tortillas**
If you purchase corn tortillas from a grocery store shelf that is *not* refrigerated, chances are good that you’ll find a long ingredients list full of preservatives on the back of the package. Look for brands in the *refrigerated* section that contain just “corn, water and trace of lime.” See “[Corn Tortillas](#)” (p. 65) for specific brand names. Use baked corn tortillas rather than flour tortillas that are typically fried in oil. To avoid [genetically-modified organisms \(GMOs\)](#) (p. 69), be sure to purchase corn products only if they are “certified organic” or “non-GMO verified.”

Tuna (canned) – (see “[Canned Tuna](#)” – p. 62)

Turbinado – (see “[Sugars/Sweeteners](#)” – p. 88)

Turmeric

This is a dry spice (seasoning) located in the spice/baking section of any grocery store. I have never personally seen any additives in this product.

Unbleached White Flour

Regardless of whether or not it's *bleached*, white flour really has no health-giving properties. However, if you are going to eat white flour on occasion, I recommend purchasing “unbleached” varieties and making your own baked goods at home from scratch. (Note: In my recipes that require “flour,” I am referring to “unbleached white flour” unless I specifically list “whole-wheat flour,” instead.)

When flour manufacturers bleach flour, they literally use a **chlorine gas** to artificially whiten the flour. (This whitening *can* be achieved *naturally*, but it takes much more *time* – which isn't as profitable for the manufacturers.) This bleaching process also generates toxic by-products that are associated with health problems such as diabetes; and it completely destroys any natural vitamins in the flour, so the flour must then be [enriched](#) (p. 78) in an effort to “replace” these nutrients.

Although “All Purpose” flour is *white* in color, this is *not* the same thing as *unbleached* white flour. Unbleached white flour should contain *only* “unbleached white flour” in its ingredients list. All Purpose flour contains additional types of flour and (sometimes) additives to improve baking performance. All Purpose flours commonly contain “[malted barley flour](#)” (p. 79) which can be problematic for folks who are sensitive to [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76). Many brands of All Purpose flour are also *bleached* and [enriched](#) (p. 78), as explained above, so check the label carefully.

Unbleached white flour is sometimes located in a separate section of your grocer's flour aisle, along with other specialty items like gluten-free flours. Sometimes it may be necessary to visit a natural food store or health section, instead, to find this type of flour. [Bob's Red Mill](#) is one organic brand of unbleached flour that is widely available in health stores and [online](#).

Unsalted Almonds – (see “[Nuts](#)” – p. 83)

Unsweetened Cocoa Powder

Be sure to purchase cocoa powder that only contains “cocoa” (no sweeteners, etc.). All recipes in this book that require (unsweetened) cocoa powder also include a sweet ingredient (e.g., honey) to balance the bitterness of the cocoa.

Vanilla Extract (Pure Vanilla Extract)

Purchase a brand that contains just “vanilla bean extractives in water, alcohol, and sugar.” Some brands don't contain sugar, so look for those brands if you wish to avoid sugar. Some additives commonly hiding in vanilla flavorings are: “[caramel coloring](#)” (p. 77), “[high fructose corn syrup](#)” (p. 79), and “propylene glycol.” Look closely at the front of the container before you bother to check the ingredients. If it is labeled as “imitation vanilla” on the front, just leave it on the shelf. If the front label says, “*pure* vanilla extract,” proceed to the ingredients list – and, yes, you *must* check the ingredients because many “pure extracts” still contain corn syrup, etc. Because you're buying actual *extract*, it will be more expensive than other varieties of vanilla *flavoring*. Any store should have at least one brand in the baking aisle that meets these criteria.

Vegetable Broth – (see “[Broth](#)” – p. 61)

Vinegar

For recipes in my book that don't specify a particular *type* of vinegar, use apple cider vinegar!

- **Apple Cider Vinegar** – For maximum health benefit, purchase **raw** (i.e., *not* pasteurized) and **unfiltered** varieties. If you are not familiar with the many health benefits of raw, unfiltered apple cider vinegar, please do an Internet search and review the amazing benefits! It's great for digestion, skin, joints, metabolism, etc.! [Bragg](#) brand and [Spectrum](#) brand both offer organic, raw, unfiltered varieties. You may need to visit a natural food store or the health section of a regular grocery store because this type of vinegar is usually not sold in the regular vinegar section. If you can't find a raw and unfiltered variety, then at least purchase a variety that contains no added colors or flavors. The ingredients should read something like, "Made from the juice of apples diluted with water to a uniform pickling and table strength of 5% acidity." Look *carefully* because I've seen products on the market that are labeled on the front of the bottle as "apple cider **flavored** vinegar" – this is actually *white* vinegar (made from corn, *not* apples!) with artificial flavors and colors added to it to make it *look* and *taste* like **apple cider vinegar**! Crazy!
- **Balsamic Vinegar** – Avoid brands containing [caramel color](#) (p. 77) or colors of *any* kind. Also avoid brands with any added sulfur dioxide, especially if you are sensitive to [sulfites](#) (p. 89). My personal favorite variety (based on flavor) is [Spectrum Organic](#) brand, which is sold at natural food stores and the health sections of some regular grocery stores. It's more expensive than many brands, but I have yet to meet a person who didn't feel it was worth it for the flavor difference! Try different varieties until you find one *you* like the most!
- **Red Wine Vinegar** – Purchase brands containing just "wine vinegar reduced/diluted with water to 5% acidity." Avoid any added "sulphur dioxide," especially if you are sensitive to [sulfites](#) (p. 89). All red wine vinegar will contain "*naturally occurring sulfites*," but you don't want any extra to be added. You can generally find a variety that meets these requirements in a natural food store or the health food section of a regular grocery store. In Omaha, NE, [Pompeian](#) brand is one of the few "additive-free" varieties I've found at the *regular* grocery stores in the regular aisle along with the other vinegars.
- **White Vinegar** – White vinegar is made from corn. To avoid [genetically-modified organisms \(GMOs\)](#) (p. 69), be sure to purchase corn products only if they are "certified organic" or "non-GMO verified." None of my recipes use *white* vinegar. However, some of the store-bought condiments used in my book (e.g., ketchup, mustard) *do* contain white vinegar in their ingredients lists. Be sure to select only "certified organic" or "non-GMO verified" brands of such products if you wish to avoid GMOs. Also, because *white* vinegar is distilled from glutamate-rich *corn*, [free glutamic acid](#) (p. 76) may be present in *any* condiment that contains *white* vinegar. I have never *personally* experienced a glutamate reaction from eating commercial condiments, however.

Whipping Cream (also "Cream" or "Heavy Cream")

Because cream is a *milk* product, please review the milk section of this guide (p. 74) before you continue reading this whipping cream section! To avoid [genetically-modified organisms \(GMOs\)](#) (p. 69), select *certified organic* dairy products. Many conventional dairy cows are administered genetically-modified growth hormones and fed genetically-modified corn and soy.

Purchase cream that contains only "cream" or "whipping cream." Many brands contain multiple additives like "polysorbate 80," "mono- & diglycerides," and "[carrageenan](#)" (p. 78) which are inflammatory and unhealthy. Whipping cream is often called "cream" or "heavy cream." All of these terms may be used interchangeably at the grocery store. In Omaha, NE, [Kalona](#) and [Country Dairy](#) brands at Whole Foods Market are additive-free. [Burbach's](#) brand is also additive-free, and it's sold in glass bottles in the regular dairy section at Hy-Vee stores in Omaha. If you cannot find an additive-free brand at the regular grocery store, you may need to visit a natural food store or health market.

White Flour – (see "[Unbleached White Flour](#)" – p. 91)

Whole-Wheat Flour

Look for **100% Whole-Wheat Flour**, and then check the ingredients list to make *sure* that's the *only* ingredient listed. Even bags of flour that say "whole wheat" on the front may contain some *white* flour or other ingredients, so always check the ingredients list – it should only have ONE ingredient! ☺ Don't be fooled by flours labeled as "**wheat flour**" – it must say "**whole**-wheat flour." Otherwise, it's just refined, *white* flour disguised under a different name! White flour is made from *wheat*, so they can get away with calling it "wheat flour." Pretty tricky, isn't it?

Yeast

Because fermentation of molasses is involved in the manufacturing of yeast, most yeast products contain some amount of [free glutamate](#) (p. 76). You'll need to determine for yourself whether or not this amount of free glutamate causes reactions for you and adjust the amount of yeast-containing foods in your diet accordingly. Yeast is also a possible source of [genetically-modified organisms \(GMOs\)](#) (p. 69). The production of yeast involves sugar. When sugar beets (or molasses extracted from sugar beets) are utilized, GMOs may be present unless the molasses and/or sugar beets are labeled as "certified organic" or "non-GMO verified."

- **Instant or Quick Rising Yeast** - Look for a variety like [Fleischmann's RapidRise Yeast](#) that contains only "yeast and ascorbic acid." Ascorbic acid is synthetic vitamin C. There is only one recipe in my cookbook that requires yeast, so if you are not comfortable with the use of ascorbic acid (or you have an allergy to it), just skip the recipe on page 25 for "Thick Pizza Crust." Use the "Quick (Thin) Pizza Crust" recipe on page 25, instead – it's yeast-free *and* simpler to make, anyway.
- **Regular Yeast (not instant/quick rising)** - Look for varieties like [Rapunzel](#) brand which contain just "yeast." Not all stores will carry yeast that meets this requirement, so you may need to order online or skip recipes that contain yeast altogether. (*No recipes in my cookbook require this type of yeast.*)

Yogurt

Because yogurt is a *milk* product, please review the [milk](#) section of this guide (p. 74) before you continue reading this yogurt section! If you are eating yogurt as a "health food" or to lose or control your weight, you may want to double-check the ingredients label. Many common commercial brands contain sugar and/or high fructose corn syrup; and many contain artificial colors and flavors, as well. Many varieties also contain hidden sources of MSG like "[guar gum](#)" (p. 79), "[natural flavors](#)" (p. 80), "[whey](#)" (p. 82), "[xanthan gum](#)" (p. 82), "[pectin](#)" (p. 80), "[carrageenan](#)" (p. 78), "[gelatin](#)" (p. 79), "[dry milk solids](#)" (p. 78), etc.

To avoid [genetically-modified organisms \(GMOs\)](#) (p. 69), choose *certified organic* dairy products. Many conventional dairy cows are administered genetically-modified growth hormones and fed genetically-modified corn and soy. Look for organic, whole-milk varieties of yogurt that are *plain*; and flavor them *yourself* at home with fruit and raw honey! (**Note:** *Vanilla* yogurt is *not* the same as *plain* yogurt! Truly *plain* yogurt contains *no* flavorings or sweeteners!) Don't assume that just because it says "plain" on the front label it must be free of additives. I've seen many "plain" varieties that contain additives such as "tapioca starch," "[pectin](#)" (p. 80), "[modified food starch](#)" (p. 79), "[corn syrup solids](#)" (p. 78), "[carrageenan](#)" (p. 78), "sugar," etc. Always read the ingredients!

[Traders Point Organics](#) brand at Whole Foods Market in Omaha, NE is made from the milk of grass-fed cattle. It's also non-homogenized, and the "plain" variety contains only 2 ingredients: "organic whole milk & live cultures." Yogurt such as this brand is the best you will find at the store, and it even comes in a glass bottle! Other additive-free varieties of plain yogurt available at many natural food stores and health sections are [Cultural Revolution](#) and [FAGE](#). (FAGE brand also offers a "honey" variety that contains only *one* additional ingredient: "honey.") The *plain* varieties of [Dannon Oikos Greek](#) and [Chobani Greek](#) yogurts are also additive-free, and these brands are available at many *regular* grocery stores.