

I Wasn't Always This Fabulous Ya Know: **April 2021**

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### Shopping List

*Please buy organic when and if you can.*

- 1 lb tilapia fillets
- 4-5 lb pork shoulder, bone-in or out
- 3 slices thick-cut smoked bacon

### Dairy

- ¼ cup plain yogurt or sour cream
- 4 tablespoons Parmesan cheese, freshly grated

**Herbs:** *Always check the fridge first*

- 1 bunch cilantro, for 1 cup leaves
- 1 bunch rosemary, for 2 tablespoons chopped
- 1 bunch Italian flat leafed parsley, for 1 tablespoon

### Bakery

- 8 smaller flour or corn tortillas
- 1 dozen King Hawaiian or slider buns

### Produce

- 1 small onion
- 1 head garlic, for 9 cloves
- 1 small bag shredded cabbage, 3 cups
- 5 limes
- 1 lemon
- 8-10 oz shishito peppers
- 4 medium bok choy bulbs
- 1 mango
- 1 pineapple
- 1 lb small zucchini
- 3 scallions

### Dry

- cup Tequila
- 1 lb dried fusilli or farfalle pasta
- 2 tablespoons real mayo

### Frozen

- 3-4 oz brown rice

### Spices

- Ground cumin, 2 teaspoons
- 1 ½ tablespoons Alaea Hawaiian Red Salt OR ½ teaspoon smoked paprika

### From Your Pantry

\*\*\*ALWAYS CHECK THIS LIST – IT CHANGES\*\*\*

Olive oil, ¾ cup

Coconut aminos, 2 tablespoons or cider vinegar

Salt, Kosher

Pepper

Pan Seared Salmon with Chianti Farro Salad: **April 2021**

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**Monday:**

## **Pan Seared Salmon with Chianti Farro Salad**

This is my take on a delicious dish that I had at Culina at the Four Seasons in Beverly Hills. It is hearty, crunchy and so good for you. Two notes: We like the whole piece of salmon crispy and the trick is to get that pan screaming hot. Short on time? Use your favorite vinaigrette – but try this Chianti one soon. NOTE: This is an updated recipe.

Serves: 4    Prep: 20    Cooking: 35

## **Ingredients**

### **For the Salmon**

1 lb skin-on salmon fillet, preferably wild-caught, cut into 4 pieces

2 tablespoons olive oil

salt and pepper

### **For the Vinaigrette**

2 cups Chianti (or other red wine)

1 tablespoon honey

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

1 tablespoon chopped fresh rosemary

1 teaspoon kosher salt, plus more for seasoning

1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, plus more for seasoning

### **For the Farro Salad**

1 cup farro

1/3 cup red onion, finely diced

½ cup cucumber, washed, not peeled, seeded and finely diced

1/3 cup red bell pepper, finely diced

1/3 cup parsley leaves, pulled from stems but left whole

## **Cooking Instructions**

### **Prep Opportunity**

Finely dice the red bell pepper and red onion. Slice the cucumber in half lengthwise. With a spoon,

remove the seeds. Finely diced the cucumber and add to pepper and onion. Remove parsley leaves from stems. Store in the fridge.

1

Soak farro for 15 minutes in a bowl of water.

2

Place the wine in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Boil gently until reduced to 1 cup, about 15 minutes. Remove from the heat.

3

Chop veggies if you didn't already.

4

Drain farro. Combine 6 cups water and farro in medium saucepan. Bring to boil.

5

Reduce heat and simmer, partially covered.

6

After, 10 minutes, test farro. It should be cooked but still very toothsome.

7

Meanwhile, make the vinaigrette. Into the wine reduction, whisk the honey until dissolved. Add the extra-virgin olive oil, rosemary, salt, and pepper. Whisk to combine.

8

Pat the salmon dry with papertowel or a tea towel. Season with salt and pepper and set aside.

9

Drain farro and rinse in cold water to cool. Toss with vinaigrette and set aside.

10

Heat your pan over medium high heat.

11

Once it's very hot, add the olive oil.

12

After 15-20 seconds, carefully lay the salmon fillets in the skillet skin side down. Cook without moving, pressing gently on fillets with a spatula to ensure skin is in full contact with pan, until skin is golden and crisp, about 5 minutes.

13

Turn them over and cook for another 3 minutes for medium. Cooking time will depend on thickness of fish and desired doneness.

14

Add chopped vegetables and parsley to the farro and toss.

15

Divide farro salad among plates.

16

Top with salmon.

Baked Ham and Scalloped Potatoes: **April 2021**

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**Tuesday:**

# Baked Ham and Scalloped Potatoes

A week or two after Easter, we can always get a good deal on a baked, spiral cut ham. Paired with my Mom's scalloped potatoes? Winner! NOTE: There will be leftover ham for use later in the week.  
Serves: 4    Prep: 20    Cooking: 1 hour

## Ingredients

### For the Ham

1 (6-8 lb.) ham, fully cooked, bone-in  
1 can ginger ale  
3 tablespoons mustard (I like a whole grain Dijon )  
¼ cup brown sugar

### For the Potatoes

3 tablespoons unsalted butter  
2 large shallots, sliced  
1 cup cream  
1 cup milk  
2 teaspoons dry mustard  
5 medium Russey or Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced (2 1/2 to 3 pounds)  
coarse salt  
freshly ground black pepper  
8 oz high-quality sharp cheddar, grated (2 ½ cups)

### For the Simple Salad

1 head lettuce, torn into bite-sized pieces  
3 tomatoes, seeded and chopped  
1/2 English cucumber, sliced  
1/4 cup Italian parsley, chopped  
1 tablespoon good olive oil  
1 tablespoon white wine vinegar  
1/4 teaspoon Kosher salt  
1/4 teaspoon black pepper

## Cooking Instructions

- 1  
Preheat the oven to 275°.
- 2  
Place ham, cut side down, in a deep roasting pan, cover with foil and bake for 10 minutes per pound.
- 3  
Meanwhile, prepare the potatoes by melting the butter in a medium skillet over low heat.
- 4  
Add the shallots and sauté until it is completely softened to translucent, but not browned, 10 to 15

minutes. Set aside to cool.

5

Butter a 12-cup baking dish.

6

In a measuring cup, combine the cream, milk and dry mustard. Pour 3 tablespoons of the cream mixture in the baking dish.

7

Layer the bottom of the dish with 1/2 of the potatoes.

8

Sprinkle with salt and pepper.

9

Layer half of the shallots, then 1/2 of the cheese and then 1/2 cream mixture. Repeat.

10

Top with the remaining potatoes and the remaining cheese and cream mixture.

11

Cover with foil and bake alongside the ham for 30 minutes at 275°.

12

After ham has baked for 3/4 of the calculated time, mix ginger ale, mustard and brown sugar. Uncover the ham and pour the glaze over. Bake for the remainder without the foil.

13

After the ham is done, remove the foil from the potatoes, increase the heat to 375°. Bake for another 20-30 minutes, or until the top is brown, the cream is bubbling, and the potatoes are tender – insert a knife to assure doneness.

14

Let both the potatoes and ham rest for at least 15 minutes.

15

Toss the salad ingredients and serve.

Tuscan Bread Soup with Grilled Cheese: **April 2021**

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**Wednesday:**

## Tuscan Bread Soup with Grilled Cheese

I made this for a dear friend that was visiting from far way. Years ago, we spent a summer together in Italy so this was my nod to that time. Unfortunately, her flights were delayed over and over. This soup kept beautifully. Once she had a glass of wine and tucked into this hearty tomato soup, she sighed “I feel like I’m home.” The grilled is a new house favorite that was invented by chopping up some stuff I found in the fridge.

Serves: 4   Prep: 30(mostly inactive)   Cooking: 40

## Ingredients

**For the Soup**

4 slices hearty, peasant bread, 1" thick  
1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil  
6 medium cloves garlic, minced  
1 medium onion, very finely chopped  
1 bunch basil leaves, washed well and cut across into narrow strips, chiffonade  
28 ozs canned diced San Marzano/plum tomatoes  
4 cups vegetable stock  
2 teaspoons kosher salt  
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, to taste  
Balsamic vinegar

### **For the Grilled Cheese**

8 slices of peasant bread  
4 slices of Provolone cheese  
1 cup chopped olives, sundried tomatoes, pepperoncini, etc or Trader Joe's tapenade  
1 tablespoon butter, softened

## **Cooking Instructions**

### **Prep Opportunity**

Heat the oven to 225°. Place the sliced bread directly on the middle rack of the oven. Bake for 30 minutes to dry the bread out. Do not brown. Break the bread into large pieces. Set aside, uncovered. Raid the fridge and finely chop olives, peppers and whatever you may like.

1

In a heavy bottomed pot, heat the oil over medium heat.

2

Add the garlic and onion - cook and stir for 5 minutes.

3

Prep the basil by stacking the leaves largest to smallest. Roll them up like a cigar and slice thinly. Add the basil to the pot and cook for 1 minute.

4

Add the tomatoes to the pot, raise the heat to medium high and bring to a boil. Reduce to low and cook, uncovered for 15 minutes. Stir frequently.

5

Stir in stock, bread, salt and pepper and return to a boil.

6

Reduce the heat again and simmer for 15 minutes.

7

After 5 minutes or so, begin breaking up the bread with the back of a spoon. The bread should break down to a sort of mush. (I am impatient and use the immersion blender/blender stick/boat motor) You could also use your blender – but remember it hot!

8

Remove the pot from the heat, cover, and let sit for 10 minutes.

9

Heat a panini press or large pan over medium heat.

10  
Butter slices of bread, flip over and layer cheese and 1 ½ -2 tablespoon of tapenade.

11  
Close sandwich and grill to golden brown.

12  
Serve soup I warmed bowls with a few grinds of fresh pepper, a drizzle of balsamic vinegar and grilled cheese.

Tortellini alla Panna: **April 2021**

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**Thursday:**

## Tortellini alla Panna

I enjoyed this dish almost every single day one summer in Siena. Of course I was 19 and burned calories dancing the night away. I still like to have it once a year for the memories... it's creamy, tangy and delicious - go ahead, live a little.

Serves: 4   Prep: 15   Cooking: 15

## Ingredients

1 lb tortellini, fresh  
2 tablespoons kosher or sea salt  
1 stick of good quality butter  
1 cup green peas (frozen is fine, just have them thawed out)  
½- ¾ cup cubed ham or prosciutto, chopped  
2/3 cup heavy cream  
8 ounces Parmigiano cheese, freshly grated  
Sea salt to taste  
½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper  
a good pinch of freshly ground nutmeg to taste

## Cooking Instructions

### Prep Opportunity

Cube the ham.

1  
In a large, deep pot add the water and salt. Bring to a boil.

2  
Meanwhile, when the water is heating, melt the butter in a large skillet on a low temperature.

3  
When the water begins to boil, add the tortellini, a few at a time.

4

Cook for just 3 minutes and remove the tortellini with a strainer.

5

Gently add the tortellini to the melted butter in the skillet and toss to coat.

6

Add the peas and prosciutto.

7

Add the heavy cream and the grated Parmigiano.

8

The tortellini MUST be prepared IN the sauce.

9

Continue to toss very gently for 3 - 4 minutes.

10

Sprinkle with extra cheese, pepper and nutmeg.

11

Serve immediately.