

Trying – An Approach to Good Eating: **December 2020**

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Shopping List

Please buy organic when and if you can.

1 lb Italian turkey sausage – pork is good if turkey is unavailable

4 lbs boneless chuck roast, trimmed

Dairy

½ cup heavy cream

1 cup ricotta salata or Parmesan

½ cup milk

4 slices Provolone cheese

1 cup plain yogurt

1 cup Feta cheese

Herbs: *Always check the fridge first*

1 bunch thyme, for 3-4 sprigs

1 bunch basil, for a ¾ cup chopped

Bakery

1 loaf of peasant style bread

4 thin flatbreads or whole wheat pitas

Produce

1 shallot

2 heads of garlic, for 16 cloves

6 oz baby spinach

3 onions

5-6 carrots

3 ribs of celery

1 ½ lbs russet potatoes

1 head of romaine lettuce

1 tomato

1 english cucumber

2 green onions

1 juicy lemon

Dry

1 lb orecchiette

3 tablespoons tomato paste

12 oz beef stock

28 oz San Marzano tomatoes, diced or crushed

32 oz vegetable stock

½ cup olive tapenade

Spices

Nutmeg, ¼ teaspoon

Red pepper flakes, ¼ teaspoon
Bay leaves, 2
Dried oregano, 2 teaspoons

From Your Pantry

ALWAYS CHECK THIS LIST – IT CHANGES

Olive oil, ¾ cup
Vegetable oil, 4 tablespoons
All Purpose Flour, ¼ cup
Worcestershire, 1 ½ tablespoons
½ cup white wine
Butter, unsalted, ¾ cup
Balsamic vinegar
Salt, Kosher
Pepper

Orecchiette with Sausage and Spinach: **December 2020**

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Monday:

Orecchiette with Sausage and Spinach

This is a perfect Monday night dish. It's a quickie, coming in at 30 minutes, and it tastes much more decadent than it is. Need more convincing? Cheese, sausage and pasta – boom! Turkey sausage can be hard to find sometimes so use pork.

Serve: 4 Prep: 5 Cooking: 30

Ingredients

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 lb Italian turkey sausage – If you can't find it, use pork
1 shallot, finely diced
4 cloves of garlic
½ cup heavy cream
¼ teaspoon nutmeg
¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes, optional
1 lb orecchiette
Kosher salt
Pepper
1 cup ricotta salata or Parmesan
6 oz baby spinach

Cooking Instructions

Prep Opportunity

Grate your cheese before you begin.

1

Set a pot of water to boil.

2

In a large skillet, heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil over medium high heat. If using pork, no oil.

3

Add sausage and break it up as it cooks until just browned – 4 minutes.

4

Stir in shallots and cook 4 minutes.

5

Add garlic and cook 30 seconds.

6

Stir in heavy cream, nutmeg and pepper flakes if using. Once bubbling, reduce heat to low and stir to thicken – 5 minutes. Remove from heat.

7

Add pasta to salted boiling water and cook to al dente.

8

With a large measuring cup, remove 2 cups of pasta cooking water.

9

Drain pasta and return to the pot over medium heat.

10

Add sausage mixture, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of cheese, and 1 cup of the pasta water. Stir to combine.

11

Stir in half of the spinach and cover for 2 minutes.

12

Add remaining spinach, more pasta water if needed, cover and cook for 2 more minutes.

13

Taste pasta for salt and pepper. Add if necessary.

14

Serve in bowls with sprinkle of remaining cheese.

Slowcooker Pot Roast and Mashed Potatoes: **December 2020**

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Tuesday:

Slowcooker Pot Roast and Mashed Potatoes

A bit of prep goes a long way and the result is a delicious, hearty dinner that's ready when you are. Consider freezing the leftover gravy to use over egg noodles when time is tight - yum. NOTE: This recipe will make a little extra beef for use later in the week.

Serves: 4 Prep: 30 Cooking: 4-5 hours HIGH/7-8 LOW

Ingredients

For the Pot Roast

4 tablespoons vegetable oil
4 lb boneless chuck roast, trimmed
Kosher salt
Fresh ground pepper
¼ cup all purpose flour
3 tablespoons tomato paste
½ cup white wine
1 ½ cups beef broth
1 ½ tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
2 onions (2 cups) sliced
5-6 carrots, peeled and cut into 3" pieces – or, the precut ones
3 ribs of celery, cut into 3"
6 cloves garlic
3-4 sprigs of thyme
2 bay leaves

For the Potatoes

1 ½ lbs potatoes, peeled and cut into 1 ½" chunks
½ cup milk
½ cup butter
Kosher salt
Fresh ground pepper

Cooking Instructions

Prep Opportunity

Peel and slice the onions and carrots.

1

Heat oil in a sauté pan over medium-high heat.

2

Spinkle the beef with salt and pepper.

3

Brown the roast on all sides - about 2-3 minutes per side.

4

Transfer roast to the slowcooker.

5

Stir the flour into the residual oil in the pan and cook for 1 minute.

6

Add tomato paste and cook 1 minute more.

7

Add wine, stir and cook until the liquid is evaporated.

8

Add broth and Worcestershire.

9

Pour the sauce over the roast in the slowcooker.

10

Add onions, carrots, thyme and bay leaves.

11

Set slowcooker and let 'er rip.

12

To make the potatoes, place them in a pot and cover with water by 1”.

13

Bring to a boil and cook 12-15 minutes until tender.

14

Drain, return to the pot and cook over low heat for 1 minute to remove the moisture.

15

Mash with milk, butter, salt and pepper.

16

Serve beef and carrots with mashed potatoes and gravy over top.

Tuscan Bread Soup with Grilled Cheese: **December 2020**

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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 cheese 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, 3/4 cup chiffonade

28 ozs canned diced San Marzano/plum tomatoes

4 cups vegetable stock

2 teaspoons kosher salt

½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Balsamic vinegar

For the Grilled Cheese

8 slices of peasant bread

4 slices of Provolone cheese

½ 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 tablespoons of tapenade.

11

Close sandwich and grill to golden brown.

12

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

Greek Pita with Lemon-Feta Tzatziki: **December 2020**

Thursday:

Greek Pita with Lemon-Feta Tzatziki

I love to throw this fresh, bright flavor profile into a gloomy weather week. The tzatziki is great the next day with veggies in lunchboxes or for me!

Serves: 4 Prep: 15 Cooking: 10

Ingredients

For the Pita

4 thin flatbreads or pitas
2-3 cups pot roast, chopped
2 cups romaine lettuce, chopped
1 tomato, chopped

For the Tzatziki

1 cup plain yogurt
1 cup feta cheese
1 cup cucumber, chopped
4 green onions, chopped
1 lemon, zested and juiced
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 teaspoons oregano
½ teaspoon kosher salt
¼ fresh pepper

Cooking Instructions

Prep Opportunity

Make the tzatziki and store in the fridge.

1

Warm the beef either in a skillet or sauté pan.

2

Place the pitas in a Ziploc and microwave for 20 seconds to make the pliable.

3

Layer beef, lettuce, tomato on the pita.

4

Top with tzatziki.

5

Wrap and enjoy.