



15 FAST FRESH DINNERS

Delicious Recipes to Cook on Busy Weeknights



MACHEESMO

— CONFIDENT HOME COOKING —



WHY HELLO!

I've been writing recipes and talking about food on the Internet for a shocking six years. I think that makes me solidly middle-aged in Internet years. In those six years, I have written over 1,000 recipes on Macheesmo, I've published a cookbook, and I've even been on a primetime TV show (Food Fighters)! Mostly though, I've had a ton of fun and learned to cook some great meals.

Beyond teaching myself how to cook, I've also learned that most people aren't *quite* as passionate about cooking as I am. Sometimes you just need to get dinner on the table and want to make something simple, fail-proof, and delicious.

That's where this little ebook comes in! It's a quick rundown of fifteen of my go-to recipes from over the years. These recipes really are some of my favorites. They are the recipes I turn to when I need a quick weekday dinner and I think you'll really love them.

If you have any questions about any of the recipes, feel free to hit me up on twitter (@macheesmo) or on Facebook (/macheesmo) or you can just email me at nick@macheesmo.com!

Thanks for subscribing to the Macheesmo newsletter and I hope you have some good meals in your future!

Cheers,
Nick

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STILL HUNGRY?

SESAME CHICKEN UDON



Serves 4



40 Minutes

1 pound chicken
1/3 cup rice wine vinegar
2 tablespoons honey
1 tablespoon soy sauce
1 teaspoon chili garlic sauce

12 ounces Udon noodles
2 tablespoons sesame oil

Pepper Ginger Salsa:

2 cups chopped spinach
1 1/2 cups sweet peppers, chopped
3 scallions, chopped
1 inch fresh ginger, grated
1 tablespoon fresh cilantro, minced
1 tablespoon olive oil
Pinch salt and pepper

1) Stir together rice wine vinegar, honey, soy sauce, and chili garlic sauce. Add chicken and let marinate for at least 10 minutes.

2) Grill chicken over medium-high heat for 6-8 minutes per side until it's cooked through. If you don't have a grill, you can use a grill pan or sear it in a skillet over medium-high heat and then transfer it to a 350 degree F. oven to finish cooking.

3) Stir together ingredients for pepper ginger salsa. Season with salt and pepper and set aside until needed.

4) Cook Udon noodles according to package in boiling water. Once they are tender, drain them and toss hot noodles with sesame oil to keep them from sticking.

5) Divide noodles between plates and top with a big heap of the pepper salsa and top finally with chopped chicken.

Serve while warm!

SHREDDED SQUASH PASTA TOSS



Serves 4



40 Minutes

1 small butternut squash, grated
1 small yellow onion, diced
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 lb. orecchiette pasta, cooked
2 cups pasta water
1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, grated
3-4 leaves fresh sage, minced
Salt and pepper
Parmesan cheese, garnish

- 1) Cook orecchiette pasta in salted water until al dente. Reserve about two cups of cooking water for the sauce and drain pasta.
- 2) While pasta cooks, peel and grate your squash using a box grater. You should be able to get 3-4 cups of grated squash.
- 3) In a large skillet or pan, add olive oil and butter over medium heat. Add the onion and a pinch of salt and pepper and cook until onion starts to soften, 2-3 minutes.
- 4) Add grated squash to the skillet and cook for 4-5 minutes until squash is tender. Add fresh sage near the end.
- 5) Add drained pasta to the skillet and toss to combine. Add enough pasta water to make a sauce in the skillet. As the sauce heats, it should thicken and hold onto the pasta. You will need at least a cup of pasta water, but might need up to two cups.
- 6) Fold in Parmesan cheese near the end of the cooking process and season the pasta with salt and pepper.
- 7) Serve pasta in big bowls garnished with extra Parmesan.

ARTICHOKE PICCATA



Serves 4



40 Minutes

2 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 tablespoons olive oil
1/2 white onion, diced
1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
1 cup chicken stock
2 tablespoons pesto
1 (14-oz.) can artichokes, drained
1/4 cup capers, drained
1 (15-oz) can white beans, drained
1 lemon, zest and juice
Salt and pepper
12 ounces capellini pasta, cooked
Parmesan cheese, for serving
Fresh parsley, garnish

Baguette, for serving

- 1) Bring a large pot of salted water to a simmer for pasta and set it aside for later.
- 2) In a second large skillet or pot, add olive oil and butter over medium heat. Add diced onion and cook until soft, about 2 minutes.
- 3) Add flour to the pot and stir and cook flour for 30 seconds. Then stir in chicken stock and pesto and stir to combine. Turn heat down to medium low.
- 4) Add pasta to boiling water and cook until al dente, probably 2-3 minutes if you're using a thin pasta like capellini. Reserve 2 cups of pasta cooking water and drain pasta.
- 5) Add 1/2 cup of pasta water to pot with sauce and stir. Then stir in artichokes, capers, drained beans, lemon juice, and cooked pasta.
- 6) Stir together and add enough extra pasta water to form a sauce that just coats the pasta.
- 7) Divide pasta between bowls or plates and top with grated Parmesan cheese, lemon zest, and parsley. Serve with toasted baguette!

VEGGIE SHEET PASTA



Serves 4



35 Minutes

1 bunch broccolini
2 pints cherry tomatoes
2 cloves garlic
3 tablespoons olive oil
1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
12 ounces lasagna noodles, boiled
3-4 scallions, minced
3-4 ounces Parmesan, shaved
Salt and pepper
Fresh parsley, garnish
Extra olive oil, garnish

1) Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. Cut off tough ends from broccolini and toss with cherry tomatoes, garlic, olive oil, red pepper flakes, and a good pinch of salt and pepper. Spread out veggies on a baking sheet or two.

2) Roast veggies for 20-25 minutes until the tomatoes are blistered.

3) Meanwhile, cook noodles in salted water until *al dente*, about 13-15 minutes (check package).

3) When veggies are done remove from oven. Drain pasta and reserve one cup of pasta water. Add blistered veggies to pot with noodles and stir 1/2 cup of pasta water back in. Feel free to add more pasta water if it's dry.

4) Divide pasta and veggies between four plates. Garnish with minced scallions, lots of shaved Parmesan cheese, a drizzle of olive oil, fresh parsley, and a sprinkle of salt and pepper.

Serve immediately!

GOAT CHEESE AND TOMATO PASTA



Serves 4



30 Minutes

1/3 cup olive oil
1 clove garlic, minced
2 pints cherry tomatoes, divided
12 ounces shell pasta
5 ounces goat cheese
Fresh basil, garnish
Pine nuts, toasted for garnish
Salt and pepper

- 1) Take out about half of a pint of cherry tomatoes and dice them finely. For the rest of the cherry tomatoes just chop them in half or in quarters depending on size.
- 2) In a large bowl, add olive oil, minced garlic, about a teaspoon of kosher salt, and the diced and halved tomatoes. Stir together well and let sit for 10-15 minutes.
- 3) Cook pasta according to package in salted water until it's al dente. Drain pasta and save 2 cups of the pasta cooking water.
- 4) Add drained pasta to bowl with tomatoes and stir to combine. Stir in about a cup of hot pasta cooking water and 3 ounces of the goat cheese. Stir to combine.
- 5) Toast pine nuts lightly in a dry skillet over low heat. You'll only need a small handful per bowl of pasta. Keep a close eye on the pine nuts as they toast or they will burn. When they are fragrant and lightly toasted, remove them from the heat.
- 6) Stir pasta well to combine. If it's really dry, add more reserved cooking water. Divide pasta between serving bowls. Garnish with dollops of extra goat cheese, fresh basil, and toasted pine nuts.



GREEK CHICKEN SALAD



Serves 4



25 Minutes

5 ounces baby spinach or other green
4 small chicken breasts
2 small tomatoes, quartered
1 small cucumber, sliced
1/2 small red onion, sliced thin
6-8 radishes, quartered
1 cup kalamata olives, chopped
1 cup marinated artichokes
4 ounces crumbled feta
Olive oil
Salt and pepper

Dressing:

1/2 cup olive oil
1/2 cup red wine vinegar
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 teaspoon dried basil
1 teaspoon black pepper
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1 teaspoon mustard

For dressing: Shake all ingredients together vigorously in a jar or salad dressing container or whisk together in a bowl.

- 1) Drizzle chicken breasts with olive oil and season well with salt and pepper.
- 2) Cook chicken over a hot grill for 8-10 minutes per side until cooked through. Alternatively, you can sear chicken breasts in a skillet or grill pan and finish them in a 350 degree F. oven until they reach an internal temperature of 165 degrees F.
- 3) Let chicken rest briefly and then chop into big chunks.
- 4) Divide spinach or other greens between four plates. Top with chicken and other salad toppings.
- 5) Drizzle with Greek salad dressing and serve immediately!



WEEKDAY LENTIL STEW



Serves 4



40 Minutes

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 medium white onion, diced
2 medium carrots, peeled and diced
1 1/2 cups green lentils
1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes
2 cups water
2 cups vegetable broth
1 bunch Swiss chard
Salt and pepper

Cumin Spiced Yogurt:

1 cup Greek yogurt
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 lemon, juice only
Pinch of salt

For cumin yogurt: Mix ingredients together in a small bowl and store in the fridge until needed.

1) For stew, add olive oil to a large pot over medium heat. Once oil is hot, add onions and carrots and a pinch of salt.

Cook vegetables until they begin to soften, about 5 minutes.

2) Add lentils, tomatoes with liquid, water, and broth to the pot and bring to a simmer. Let simmer until lentils are soft, about 10-15 minutes. If the stew ever looks very dry, add more water. Depending on the exact lentils you use, you might need a bit more.

3) Rinse the Swiss chard and cut out the thick rib in the leaves. Very roughly chop the leaves. Add chard to the pot and cook for another minute or two so the greens are wilted.

4) Season with salt and pepper and serve with cumin yogurt on top.



SPICED PORK LETTUCE WRAPS



10 Wraps



30 Minutes

1 pound ground pork
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1 tablespoon fish sauce
1 tablespoon sriracha chili oil
2 teaspoons soy sauce
1 teaspoon brown sugar
1 1/2 cups long grain rice
1/4 cup fresh cilantro
1 lime, juice only
Salt and pepper

1 head lettuce
1 carrot, grated
1 cucumber, sliced
1-2 thai or serrano peppers, chopped

1) Cook rice using any method you like. Personally, I like to boil the rice until it's al dente. Then I drain the rice when it has a small bite to it. Once it's drain, I return it to the hot pot, cover it, and let it steam off the heat for about 5 minutes.

Then stir in the cilantro and lime juice before serving.

2) To cook the pork, add vegetable oil to a skillet over medium heat. Add ground pork and brown nicely. It should take 6-7 minutes to brown well. Stir fish sauce, Sriracha, soy sauce, and brown sugar.

3) To make lettuce wraps, top lettuce with some rice, a scoop of pork, and all the veggie toppings.

These are actually a bit tricky to eat with your hands unless you get really sturdy Romaine lettuce. But they are delicious however you eat them!

SUPER CRUNCH CHICKEN SALAD



Serves 6



30 Minutes

4 cups shredded cooked chicken (1 pound)
1/4 red onion, sliced thin
3 stalks celery, diced
1/2 cup walnuts or pecans, toasted
1 cup red seedless grapes, halved
1 tablespoon parsley, chopped
1/2 cup mayonnaise
1/2 cup Greek yogurt
3 tablespoons honey
Salt and pepper

1) If you don't have leftover chicken, poach chicken in lightly salted simmering water, until it's just cooked through, probably 12-14 minutes. Then let cool and shred or chop.

2) For walnuts or pecans, toast in a dry pan over low heat until fragrant and lightly browned. Then let cool and chop. Also chop other ingredients, taking care to try to dice stuff evenly.

3) Whisk together mayo, greek yogurt, honey, and a pinch of salt and pepper.

4) Stir dressing into onion, celery nuts, grapes, and parsley. Fold in chicken last. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Serve salad on a bed of greens or on toasted bread with greens. Leftover salad will keep in the fridge for five days.

CHICKPEA SALAD SANDWICHES



Serves 6



20 Minutes

Chickpea Mashed Salad:

2 cans chickpeas, drained
2 stalks celery, diced
3 medium carrots, peeled and diced
3 scallions, diced
1/3 cup hummus
1 lemon, juice only
2 tablespoons olive oil
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
Dash of paprika
Salt and pepper

Sandwich Gear:

Whole Wheat Bread
Lettuce
Avocado

- 1) Drain chickpeas and mash them well using a potato masher or a large fork.
- 2) Dice celery, carrots, and scallions and mash them into the chickpea mix.
- 3) Add lemon juice, hummus, and olive oil along with seasonings and continue to mash. Stir together well and adjust seasoning to your liking.

To make a sandwich, toast two pieces of bread and lay down some lettuce. Top with big heaps of the chickpea spread and sliced avocado.



CHICKEN APPLE QUESADILLAS



Serves 6



30 Minutes

2 apples, peeled and sliced thin
1 pound shredded chili chicken (4 cutlets)
8 (6-inch) corn tortillas
2 cups grated Pepper Jack cheese
Salsa
Sour cream

Pinto Bean Salad:

2 15-ounce cans pinto beans, rinsed and drained
1 15-ounce can diced tomatoes, rinsed
1 small red onion, diced
2 cups frozen sweet corn (thawed)
1 clove garlic, minced
1 lime, juice only
2 avocados, diced
1/4 cup cilantro, minced
Salt and pepper

For Salad: Drain beans and rinse them well. Stir beans, tomatoes, diced onion, and sweet corn together. Season salad with lime juice, garlic, and salt and pepper.

Fold in sliced avocado and cilantro and chill until serving. Salad will keep fine for a few days in the fridge.

1) Peel and slice apples into thin slices. Shred chicken or roughly chop it. If you microwave the chicken for 30 seconds it will shred easier.

2) On a large griddle or in a large skillet, add a tablespoon of olive oil over medium-high heat. Working with one tortilla at a time, add it to the hot pan and top one half with chicken, a few apple slices, and cheese. Fold tortilla over to form a half circle. Press down on it lightly so it holds its shape and move it to the outer part of the pan while you work on a second one. Do as many tacos as you can fit at once without them overlapping.

3) Cook quesadillas for about 3 minutes per side until tortilla is crispy and cheese is well-melted.

4) Serve quesadillas with salsa, sour cream, and bean salad.

If you only have a small pan, you can keep cooked quesadillas warm in a 250 degree oven as you work on the other ones.



10 Tacos



30 Minutes

BAKED OR GRILLED FISH TACOS



1 1/2 pounds white fish filets (like cod)
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
1 tablespoon olive oil
Coarse salt and pepper

Chipotle Cream:
1 cup sour cream
1 lime, juiced
2 tablespoons adobo sauce
from chipotle peppers

Spicy Cabbage Slaw:
1/2 head green cabbage
2 carrots, shredded
1/2 red pepper, sliced thin
4 scallions, minced
1 jalapeno, seeded and minced
1/3 cup sour cream
1/4 cup white wine vinegar
Big pinch of salt and pepper

Taco needs:
10 medium flour tortillas
1 avocado sliced thin
4 ounces queso fresco, crumbled
Fresh cilantro

For slaw, shred cabbage finely with a knife or in a food processor. Grate carrots and slice red peppers thin. Then mince jalapeno and scallions and add to a bowl. Stir in sour cream and white wine vinegar and season well with salt and pepper. Let this sit for 20 minutes or so before serving (or make it a day in advance).

For cream mixture, stir lime juice and adobo sauce into sour cream. Just use the sauce from the chipotle can (not the actual peppers).

1) To prepare the fish, preheat grill to medium-high heat or heat oven to 450 degrees F. Season fish well with salt and pepper, drizzle with olive oil, and place a few pats of butter on the fish. Wrap white fish filets in foil tightly.

5) Grill (or bake) the fish wrapped in foil for about 5 minutes per side until it's cooked through, but light and flakey. It'll be hard to overcook it because of the foil wrapping.

6) When you're ready to make a taco (or 10), grill tortillas for 10 seconds just to warm them up. Then add some slaw to a tortilla and top with some flaked fish, a spoon of spicy sauce, and any other toppings you want (avocados, queso fresco, and cilantro).

You'll have leftover slaw which is great just to eat as a side dish!



BLACK BEAN BURRITO BOWLS



Serves 6



40 Minutes

3 cups uncooked long grain rice

1 lime

**2 15-ounce cans black beans,
drained and rinsed**

10 ounces frozen corn, thawed

8 ounces cheddar cheese, grated

10 corn tortillas

8 ounces salsa

3 avocados

Fresh cilantro

Olive oil

Chili powder

Salt and pepper

1) Cook rice using your favorite method. I like to boil mine in water until tender and then drain it and return it to the hot pan. Squeeze in a lime and cover it and let it steam for 5 minutes (off the burner). Then fluff with a fork.

2) Stir together corn with drained and rinsed black beans. Season with a pinch of salt, pepper, and chili powder if needed.

3) For tortilla strips, cut into 1/2 inch strips and spread out on a baking sheet. Drizzle with oil, salt and pepper. Roast at 350 for 10-15 minutes until they are browned and turning crispy. Remove from oven and let cool completely. They will get crispier as they cool. Store in an air-tight container.

4) To make a bowl, pile some rice in a bowl. Add some black beans and corn and top with grated cheese (just a small handful). Top with salsa, corn tortillas, avocado (and cilantro optionally).



SWEET POTATO ENCHILADAS



Serves 6



45 Minutes

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 large sweet potato, chopped
1 onion, chopped
1 15-oz. can black beans, drained
1 16-oz can tomatillo salsa
12 ounces monterey jack cheese, grated
16-20 (6-inch) flour tortillas

Toppings:

Queso fresco, crumbled
Sour cream
Avocado
Fresh cilantro

Enchilada Sauce:

1 15-oz. can tomato sauce
2 cups vegetable stock
1 tablespoon chili powder
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon onion powder
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1 teaspoon black pepper
2 chipotle peppers, seed and chopped (optional)

1) Heat the sauce ingredients in a medium pot over medium heat until simmering. Stir together to combine and simmer for 5-10 minutes until the sauce thickens slightly. Keep warm over low heat until needed.

2) Peel and chop the sweet potato (you want about a pound of sweet potato). Slice it into matchsticks and then chop it into 1 inch pieces.

3) In a large skillet, add a drizzle of oil over medium heat. Add chopped sweet potatoes and cook until they are browned lightly, about 6-8 minutes. Then add chopped onions and a pinch of salt and pepper and cook until tender.

4) Add salsa and drained and rinsed beans to the skillet and stir to combine and heat through. Season with salt and pepper.

5) For enchiladas, add a few spoonfuls of sauce to a large baking dish. Microwave flour tortillas for 20 seconds on high to loosen them. Then, working with one at a time, add some grated monterey jack cheese to the tortilla and top with sweet potato mixture.

Roll it tightly and place it in the baking dish. Repeat until you fill the baking dish. You should get 10-12 enchiladas in the dish and will probably have enough filling to do a smaller second dish. Once your enchiladas are in the dish, pour sauce over the enchiladas. Top with crumbled queso fresco cheese.

7) Cover the dish with foil and bake it at 400 degrees for 10 minutes. Then remove the foil and broil it on high heat to crisp up the top of the enchiladas (3-5 minutes depending on your broiler). Keep a close eye on it while broiling as it can burn quickly.

8) Let enchiladas cool and then serve with toppings.



CHORIZO YAM TACOS



Serves 4



45 Minutes

1 pound chorizo
1 large yam or sweet potato
2 poblano peppers
Flour tortillas
Feta or cotija Cheese
Kosher salt

Quick Pickled Onions:

1 large red onion, sliced thin
1 lime, juice only
1 teaspoon kosher salt

- 1) Peel and slice red onions thinly. Add them to a bowl with the lime juice and a good pinch of salt. Cover and let marinate for at least 30 minutes while you make the rest of the fillings.
- 2) Chop up the yam and poblano peppers. Try to chop both into long matchsticks of roughly the same size.
- 3) Remove casing from chorizo if it has it on and start browning it in a skillet over medium high heat.
- 4) Once chorizo is cooked, add in poblanos and yams and cook until they start to soften.
- 5) Warm your tortillas in a hot skillet for a few seconds per side or you can do them in a large batch in the oven by wrapping them in foil and baking them for a few minutes at 350 degrees.
- 6) Add chorizo filling to a few tortillas and top with crumbled cheese and marinated onions.

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