





Easy Weeknight Eats For Your Busy Self









MACHESMO

2008

-COOKING WITH CONFIDENCE-

"My name is Nick Evans and I started Macheesmo over eight years ago. I'm a 34 year old dude living in Denver, CO with my wife and official taste-tester, Betsy, our little dude, Theo, our daughter, Darby, the family dog, Porter, and our cat, Tipsy.

What is Macheesmo?

Macheesmo is a phrase I came up with that simply means feeling confident in your kitchen. Luckily, Macheesmo is something that can be learned.

Over the years, I've posted over 1,000 recipes on Macheesmo covering a huge range of cuisines. For each one I do my best to give full explanations of what I did and tips on what I'd do differently next time.

I think it's time for people to put down the take-out menus and pick up the spatulas and I hope these recipes help you do that!

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Serves 4

PREP TIME

ARTICHOKE PICCATA

INGREDIENTS

2 tablespoons unsalted butter

2 tablespoons olive oil

1/2 white onion, diced

1 tablespoon all-purpose flour

1 cup veggie 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

- Bring a large pot of salted water to a simmer for pasta and set it aside for later
- 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.
- Add flour to the pot and stir and cook flour for 30 seconds. Then stir in veggie stock and pesto and stir to combine. Turn heat down to medium low.
- 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.
- 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!



Serves 4-6

PREP TIME

15 Minutes

COOK TIME

30 Minutes

TOTAL TIME

45 Minutes



INGREDIENTS

- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 bunches spinach, rinsed and stems chopped
- 1 (15 oz. can) artichokes, chopped
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2 1/2 3 cups milk
- 1 cup ricotta cheese
- 12 ounces fusilli pasta
- Salt and pepper
- 1 cup panko breadcrumbs
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes

- Rinse spinach and chop off any large stems. Mince garlic. Drain and roughly chop artichoke hearts.
- Cook fusilli pasta in salted water according to directions until al dente. Be sure not to overcook pasta or the dish will be soggy.
- In a Dutch oven or heavy large pot, add 1 tablespoon olive oil over medium heat. Then add garlic and cook for a minute. Add rinsed spinach and stir to wilt spinach. Once spinach is wilted, remove it.
- Add other three tablespoons olive oil and artichokes. Cook until they get some color on them, 3-4 minutes. Then scoot artichokes to one side of the pan and stir in flour to the oil. Cook for a minute.
- Slowly whisk in milk until the a sauce is formed. Let the sauce come to a slight simmer, stirring regularly, and let it thicken.

- Add in ricotta cheese, cooked fusilli, and wilted spinach. Season the pasta well with salt and pepper. Serve pasta immediately with spicy crunchy breadcrumbs.
- 7. For breadcrumbs: Heat butter in a small skillet over medium-low heat. Once melted, add breadcrumbs and stir to combine. Cook for 2-3 minutes until breadcrumbs start to brown. Season with red pepper flakes and remove from heat when breadcrumbs are lightly browned. Watch them closely as they can burn easily.



BEAN AND CHEESE BAKED TACOS

YIELD

12 Tacos

PREP TIME

20 Minutes

COOK TIME

15 Minutes

TOTAL TIME

35 Minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 1 (15 oz.) can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 (15 oz.) can pinto beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 small white onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 Serrano pepper, diced
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon chili powder

Salt and pepper

Pico de Gallo

2 tomatoes

1/2 red onion, diced

- 1 Serrano pepper, seeded and diced
- 1 lime, juice only
- 1 tablespoon cilantro
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt

Sour Cream

- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 lime, juice only
- 2 tablespoons hot sauce
- 12 hard taco shells
- 10-12 ounces grated cheese

Chopped lettuce

- 1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
- 2. In a medium pot, melt butter over medium heat. Once melted, start bean mash by adding onions, garlic, and Serrano pepper to pot. Cook for a few minutes until veggies soften. Then add beans and spices. Cook together for a few minutes. Then add about 1/4 cup water and mash bean mixture until somewhat smooth. Some texture is good though. Keep bean mash warm until needed over low heat.
- 3. Make pico de gallo by chopping ingredients and stirring together. Strain pico de gallo in a small mesh strainer to pull off as much liquid as possible.
- Stack taco shells in a baking dish lined with crumbled foil (to keep the tacos in place). Spoon a good amount of bean mash into each taco shell. Top with a hefty amount of cheese. Bake tacos for 10 minutes until cheese is nicely melted.

- 5. Meanwhile, stir together sour cream sauce ingredients and chop lettuce.
- 6. When tacos come out, top tacos immediately with pico de gallo, lettuce, and sour cream sauce. Serve while warm!



EASY CHICKEN SHEET PAN SUPPER

YIELD

Serves 4

PREP TIME

15 Minutes

COOK TIME

45 Minutes

TOTAL TIME

1 Hour

INGREDIENTS

1 whole chicken, butchered

2 cans chickpeas, drained and rinsed

2 baby leeks, sliced

3-4 tablespoons olive oil

1 teaspoon chili powder, for chicken

1 teaspoon paprika, for chickpeas

1 teaspoon dried oregano, for chickpeas

Salt and pepper

Fresh arugula, for serving

1 cup Greek yogurt

1 lemon, juice only

1 tablespoon olive oil

Pinch salt and pepper

- 1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Cut whole chicken into thighs (leave drumsticks attached). Try to keep the breast whole with the bone-in. Also cut off the wings. So you should have 5 pieces: 2 wings, 2 thighs, 1 whole breast.
- Toss chicken pieces with 2 tablespoons olive oil, chili powder, and a big pinch of salt and pepper.
- 3. Spread chicken pieces out on a sturdy sheet pan, skin side up. When oven is hot, bake chicken for 15 minutes.
- Meanwhile, drain chickpeas and toss with 1-2 tablespoons olive oil, paprika, oregano, and a pinch of salt and pepper.
- 5. After 15 minutes, add chickpeas to the sheet pan, sprinkling them around the chicken pieces. Return to the oven and bake for another 20 minutes or so.

- 6. While sheet pan bakes, prep yogurt sauce and slice leeks. Add leeks to sheet pan after the 20 minutes are up and return to oven.
- 7. Bake chicken and sheet pan until chicken is cooked through on the thighs and breasts. Ideally, the breast should be 165 degrees F. in the thickest part. The thighs should be a bit hotter, maybe 175 degrees F. in the thickest part. In total, they will need 40-45 minutes total baking most likely.
- 8. When sheet pan is done, serve chicken and chickpeas over fresh arugula with vogurt sauce.



BBQ CHICKEN SLOPPY JOES

YIELD

Makes 6 sandwiches

PREP TIME

10 Minutes

COOK TIME

20 Minutes

TOTAL TIME

30 Minutes

INGREDIENTS

1 cup grated onions

1 tablespoon butter

1/2 teaspoon kosher salt

1/2 teaspoon black pepper

2/3 cup BBQ sauce

1/3 cup ketchup

1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce

1 1/2 pounds chicken breasts

Hamburger buns, for serving

Lettuce, for serving

Red onion, sliced thin

Provolone cheese

Pickles

DIRECTIONS

- In a medium pot, add butter over medium heat. Once melted add grated onion and salt and pepper. Cook for a few minutes until onions are soft.
- Add BBQ sauce, ketchup, and Worcestershire sauce and stir to combine. Once combined, nestle chicken in the sauce and bring to a simmer. Turn heat down to low, cover the pot, and simmer for 8 minutes.
- Flip chicken in sauce, replace lid, and simmer for another 6 minutes. Test that chicken is cooked through completely. It should very easily shred apart. If it isn't cooked through, cook for another 4 minutes and check again.
- When chicken is cooked through, shred all the chicken using two forks. You can shred it very fine or keep it chunkier. Your call. Stir chicken back into sauce.
- 5. Serve chicken sloppy joes on toasted buns with provolone cheese, lettuce, red onions, and pickles.

6. This meal can also be made in a slow cooker. Add all the sauce ingredients and chicken and cook on low for at least 4 hours. Shred chicken and serve!



BLT QUESADILLAS

YIELD

2 large quesadillas

PREP TIME

20 Minutes

COOK TIME

10 Minutes

TOTAL TIME

30 Minutes

INGREDIENTS

6 strips bacon, crispy (save grease)

6-8 ounces pepper jack cheese, grated

4 medium (8-10 inch) flour tortillas

1 large ripe tomato

1 cup chopped Romaine lettuce

1/4 cup sour cream

1 lime, juice only

Salt and pepper

- In a medium bowl, stir together chopped lettuce and chopped tomato. Season with salt and pepper and set aside until needed. Stir together sour cream and lime juice in a small bowl.
- Cook bacon in a skillet over mediumlow heat until the fat has rendered out and it's very crispy. Remove bacon and drain off grease. Save grease.
- Wipe the skillet out and add a teaspoon of bacon grease back in. Place skillet over medium heat and add one tortilla. Top with half of the cheese and crumbled bacon. Top with second tortilla. Cook for 3-4 minutes per side until quesadilla is crispy and cheese is very melted.
- Remove quesadilla from skillet. Chop and serve immediately with a drizzle of sour cream sauce or keep warm in a 200 degree F. oven while you make more quesadillas.



SHREDDED CHICKEN HARD TACOS

YIELD

12 tacos

PREP TIME

30 Minutes

COOK TIME

20 Minutes

TOTAL TIME

50 Minutes

INGREDIENTS

1 pound boneless skinless chicken breast, poached and shredded

1 15 ounce can black beans, drained and rinsed

1/2 red onion, diced

1-2 jalapenos, minced

1/2 Cup salsa

6 ounces pepper jack cheese, shredded

12 corn tortillas

Salt and pepper

Olive oil

Sour Cream

Avocado

Lettuce

Hot Sauce

- Add chicken breasts to a medium pot and cover with water by 1/2 inch. Bring to a simmer and simmer for about 15 minutes or until chicken is cooked through.
- 2. Once chicken has cooled a bit, shred it. Also, dice onion and pepper and drain and rinse the beans.
- Add 2 tablespoons olive oil to a medium pan over medium heat. Once hot, add onions and peppers and cook until soft. Then stir in shredded chicken, black beans, and salsa.
- 4. Stir mixture until it's heated through and season with salt and pepper.
- 5. 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 and shredded cheese. Fold tortilla over to form a taco. Press down on it lightly

- so it holds it's 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.
- Cook tacos for about 3 minutes per side until tortilla is crispy and cheese is wellmelted.
- 7. Serve tacos immediately with avocado, hot sauce, lettuce, and sour cream.



WEEKNIGHT CRISPY CHICKEN

YIELD

Serves 2

PREP TIME

5 Minutes

COOK TIME

25 Minutes

TOTAL TIME

30 Minutes

INGREDIENTS

2 thin chicken cutlets

1 egg, whisked

1 cup all-purpose flour

1 tablespoon paprika

1 tablespoon salt

1 tablespoon pepper

1/3 cup olive oil

1/2 white onion, diced

1 cup chicken stock

1/2 cup heavy cream

1 lemon, zest

Fresh parsley, garnish

8 oz. angel hair pasta

- If you're starting with a full chicken breast, slice it in half horizontally to make two thin chicken cutlets.
- Dredge chicken cutlets in egg, then transfer to flour mixture (flour stirred with salt, paprika, and pepper). Coat chicken well with flour mixture and set aside.
- 3. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Once oil is hot and glistening, cook chicken for 4-5 minutes per side until the cutlets are golden brown and chicken is cooked through. Remove chicken from skillet and let drain on a paper towel.
- Drain off most the oil from the skillet, leaving about a tablespoon. Add diced onion to the skillet and cook over medium heat for 1-2 minutes until onion softens. Use the onion to scrape up any bits on the pan.

- 5. Deglaze pan with 1 cup chicken stock.
 Bring to a simmer and cook for a minute.
 Then add cream and turn heat down to low. Continue to cook so sauce thickens.
 Season sauce with salt and pepper.
- 6. Cook angel hair according to package. It should take just a few minutes.
- 7. Drain pasta and divide between two plates. Add a crispy chicken cutlet to each plate. Squirt chicken with some lemon. Top chicken with cream sauce and garnish with lemon zest and parsley.



ONE POT CHORIZO YAM STEW

YIELD

Serves 4

PREP TIME

20 Minutes

COOK TIME

30 Minutes

TOTAL TIME

50 Minutes

INGREDIENTS

1 pound chorizo, in meatballs

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 white onion, diced

4 cloves garlic, minced

2-3 sprigs thyme

2 cups chopped yams

2 cans (15 oz.) white Cannellini beans, drained and rinsed

3 cups chicken stock

1 large bunch adult spinach, rinsed well

Salt and pepper

DIRECTIONS

- Shape ground chorizo into small spoonsized meatballs. In a large pot or Dutch oven, add olive oil over medium heat. Add chorizo meatballs and cook until browned well on all sides, about 8 minutes turning occasionally.
- 2. Remove meatballs (leaving any grease in the pot) and add chopped yams and onions. Cook for 6-8 minutes until veggies are soft and possibly browned in spots. Add minced garlic and stir together and cook for 30 seconds.
- Add drained and rinsed beans, fresh thyme and chicken stock. Bring to a simmer and cook for about 5 minutes covered.
- Remove about a cup of the beans and yams from the pot and mash them well to form a paste. Stir that back into the stew to thicken it. Add meatballs back into the pot.

 Add rinsed spinach to the pot and cook for another minute or two until spinach is wilted. Season stew with salt and pepper. Serve immediately.



ONE POT CHEESEBURGER PASTA

YIELD

Serves 6

PREP TIME

15 Minutes

COOK TIME

30 Minutes

TOTAL TIME

45 Minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound lean ground beef
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 small onion, diced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon dried mustard
- 1 (28 oz.) can diced tomatoes
- 1 pound large elbow macaroni
- 2 cups beef stock
- 2 cups water
- 8 ounces cheddar cheese, grated
- Salt and pepper
- Scallions, garnish

DIRECTIONS

- Heat olive oil in a large sturdy pot over medium heat. Add beef and brown well. Break up beef as it browns.
- 2. Add onions and garlic to the pot and cook for 3-4 minutes until veggies are soft. Season mixture with oregano, mustard, and a pinch of salt and pepper. Stir in tomato paste.
- Add diced tomatoes and macaroni pasta. Stir to combine. Then add beef stock and water. Stir, cover, turn heat down to low, and simmer for 12 minutes.
- Check pasta. If it's still uncooked and the pot is dry, add another cup of water, cover, and simmer or another 2-3 minutes. Most likely though the pasta will be cooked through after 12 minutes.
- Season pasta mixture with salt and pepper. Add grated cheese to the top of the pasta, cover again, and let steam for 2-3 minutes until cheese is very melted.

6. Top cheeseburger pasta with chopped scallions and serve while warm!

30 Minutes

INGREDIENTS

1 package frozen phyllo dough

1/2 Cup olive oil, for brushing

1 pound fresh spinach or 1 10 ounce box of frozen spinach

10 oz. feta cheese, crumbled

2-3 tablespoons fresh dill, chopped

8-10 oz. low-moisture mozzarella cheese, grated

1/4 large red onion, sliced

1 roasted red pepper, diced (I used one from a jar)

1/2 Teaspoon crushed red pepper (optional)

Salt and pepper

DIRECTIONS

 Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Blanch fresh spinach in salted water until it's wilted or thaw frozen spinach in microwave. Either way, be sure to press out liquid with paper towels. You don't want a lot of liquid in the spinach.

SPANAKOPIZZA

- 2. Roughly chop the spinach and add it to the feta and dill.
- Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Layer pieces of phyllo dough on top of each other, brushing each piece with olive oil. Use about 8 pieces of phyllo dough.
- 4. Take a few single sheets of phyllo dough and brush them with oil. Roll them up and place them around the edge of the baking dish to mimic a pizza crust.
- 5. Brush the top of the dough with olive oil and poke a few holes in the surface so steam can escape.

- Crumble the feta-spinach mixture in the bottom of the baking sheet. Spread it evenly.
- 7. Next add mozzarella cheese and finally sprinkle on onions and roasted red peppers. Season with red pepper flakes and salt and pepper
- 8. Before you cook the pizza, cut it into pieces. It will be way to flaky to cut after cooking.
- 9. Bake the spanakopizza for 30 minutes at 400 degrees or until the crust is lightly browned and the cheese melted.
- 10. Let it cool briefly and serve!



EASY AND FRESH FALAFEL SALAD

YIELD

Serves 4-6

PREP TIME

20 Minutes

COOK TIME

40 Minutes

TOTAL TIME

1 Hour

INGREDIENTS

1/2 cup uncooked bulgar

1 (15 oz.) can chickpeas, drained and rinsed

1/2 cup cilantro, minced

1/2 cup parsley, minced

1 cup diced tomatoes

1 small cucumber, seeded and chopped

1/2 red onion, diced

1/3 cup tahini

1/3 cup water

1 small lemon, juice only

1/2 teaspoon ground cumin

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon garlic powder

Pinch of cayenne pepper

- Cook bulgar by toasting it in a dry pot over low heat for 1 minute. Then add 1 cup of water to the bulgar, cover and cook for about 20 minutes until bulgar has absorbed all the water (if the pot looks very dry, add more water). Once bulgar is cooked, remove it from heat and fluff with a fork.
- While bulgar cooks, chop the veggies. Take your time to chop the onion and cucumber so there aren't any huge chunks.
- In a large bowl, toss together chopped herbs, veggies, and chickpeas. Stir to combine and then stir in the cooked bulgar.
- 4. For the dressing, whisk together ingredients until the tahini is smoothed.
- 5. You can either serve the dressing on the side and let people drizzle it over the salad or toss the salad with the dressing. Personally, I like to let people dress it to their liking.



ROASTED GARLIC RICOTTA PASTA SAUCE

YIELD

Serves 4

PREP TIME

30 Minutes

COOK TIME

15 Minutes

TOTAL TIME

45 Minutes

INGREDIENTS

1 bulb garlic, roasted

1 tablespoon olive oil

Pinch kosher salt

15-16 oz. ricotta cheese

1 lemon, zest only

1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes

1/2 teaspoon black pepper

Fusilli Pasta

Reserved pasta water

Basil, for garnish

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Cut the tip off the garlic bulb, just exposing the cloves. Drizzle with olive oil and a pinch of kosher salt. Wrap the bulb in foil and roast for 30 minutes. Let garlic cool and then squeeze out roasted cloves into a bowl.
- 2. To roasted garlic, add a pinch of salt and mash together with a fork. Stir in ricotta cheese, lemon zest, black pepper, and red pepper flakes. Set aside.
- Cook 12-16 oz. pasta according to package. Reserve 2 cups of pasta water from the cooking process when you drain the pasta.
- 4. To finish the sauce, add ricotta base to a pot with pasta sauce in a 2-1 sauceto-water ratio. You can finish the sauce in batches or all at once in this way. If you add the whole ricotta sauce base to a pot, you'll want to add at least a cup

- of reserved pasta water and maybe a bit more. Stir hot pasta water into the ricotta over low heat and continue to stir until it's smooth and thick.
- 5. Divide cooked pasta between bowls and top with pasta sauce. Garnish each bowl of pasta with chopped basil, red pepper flakes, and lemon zest.

THAI CHICKEN SALAD

INGREDIENTS

1 pound chicken breasts, poached

1 large bok choy, chopped

1/2 red pepper, sliced thin

1 cucumber, seeded and sliced thin

1 large carrot, grated

1/2 papaya, seeded and sliced thin

1/2 cup edamame

Fresh mint

Fresh cilantro

1/2 cup fish sauce

1/3 cup water

1 tablespoon rice wine vinegar

1 lime, juice only

1/2 cup honey

1 clove garlic

1 jalapeno, seeded

- 1. Poach chicken breasts in a medium pot so they are just covered with water. Heat water until it's steaming, but not quite simmering. Cover and let sit on low heat until chicken is just cooked through. They should take about 20 minutes to poach. Try not to overcook them or they will dry out. Once cooked, remove chicken breasts, cool, and shred with forks.
- For dressing, combine jalapel±0 (seeded) and garlic in a small food processor with lime juice. Pulse until minced. Then add other ingredients and pulse until combined.
- Chop bok choy, red pepper, cucumber, and grate carrot. For papaya, cut in half and remove seeds (you can eat the seeds, but I don't love them). Peel papaya and slice thin. Toss veggies and fruit with bok choy. Drizzle with a few tablespoons of dressing.

- 4. Add pulled chicken and thawed edamame. Garnish with a handful of fresh cilantro and mint and an extra drizzle of dressing. Serve extra dressing on the side.
- 5. If you're planning on storing some of this salad for later, don't dress it until you're ready to serve it. The dressing will start to pickle the ingredients a bit so just store them separately until you are ready to serve them.



Serves 2-4

PREP TIME

20 Minutes

SUMMER VEGETABLE CARBONARA

INGREDIENTS

2 medium zucchini or squash

8 oz. penne pasta

2 large egg yolks

1/3 Cup heavy cream

1/2 Cup Parmesan cheese, grated and divided

4-6 slices thick bacon

Few sprigs of fresh thyme

Salt and pepper

- Chop your zucchini and fresh squash into half-circles about the size of the penne pasta. Also chop your bacon into cubes.
- 2. Whisk your egg yolks (save the whites for an omelet), cream, 1/4 Cup Parm, and a pinch of salt and pepper in a seperate bowl. Set aside for later.
- 3. Cook Penne according to box.
- 4. In a large pan with high sides, cook bacon over medium-low heat until very crispy and brown. Remove bacon from pan.
- 5. When your pasta is done, drain it and reserve about 1 Cup of cooking water.
- Add veggies to the pan with the bacon grease along with a few thyme sprigs if you want and some salt and pepper.
- 7. Cook the veggies over medium-high heat for just a minute or two. Any longer than that and they'll get soggy and mushy.

- 8. Combine pasta with veggies and add your bacon back in.
- Kill the heat and slowly add in your egg yolk mixture, stirring furiously while you add it. If you do this over the heat, your eggs will just cook, but they should into a creamy sauce if the pan isn't on direct heat
- 10. If it looks too thick, add a bit of reserved pasta water to make the sauce thicker.
- 11. Sprinkle carbonara with more cheese and serve immediately.



MACHESMO

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