

Meal ideas

Chicken

Chicken breasts, sprinkled with maple syrup roasted together with quartered lemons and un-peeled potatoes that have been lightly oiled. Serve with green beans. Or, instead of potatoes/lemons use quartered, de-seeded sweet peppers (all colours), doused in olive oil and sprinkled over with thyme and a little paprika (better still smoked paprika). Towards end of cooking add in a handful of cherry tomatoes

Chicken thighs/breasts, browned in a frying pan, then coated with olive oil/sumac or “zatar” mix, and now roasted. Sumac is a raspberry-like berry with a lemony flavour. Serve with baked potato or spelt “cous cous” or quinoa. Some other pastes to try are “rose-petal masala”, harissa or ras el hanout. All these are Middle-eastern flavours and packets of paste are now quite widely available in big supermarkets, ethnic food shops and Whole Food-type places

Chicken tagine: chicken thighs braised in olive oil with 2 tsp freshly grated ginger and ½ tsp turmeric (or few strands saffron), then add carrot sticks, few preserved lemons from a jar, 1tbsp golden or maple syrup, 150ml water and bring to boil quickly. Cover the pot, reduce the heat and simmer for 30-40 minutes. Take lid off and reduce sauce a little. Sprinkle with flat-leaf parsley or coriander and serve with quinoa

Chicken thighs or breasts, dipped in rice flower to which has been added 1/2 tsp cinnamon, 1 tsp thyme, Then dip the thighs in beaten egg, cover in wheat/gluten-free bread crumbs and oven baked. Home-made KFC!

Chicken breasts put between layers of cling-film, placed on a chopping board and pounded flat. Then coat the chicken in a mix of olive oil, finely chopped sage, thyme, rosemary and basil with zest of ½ lemon and few chili flakes, salt & pepper. Leave in a fridge for as long as you can, then fry and squeeze over with lemon juice. The marinade/rub is a variation of gremolata (Italy) or chimichurri (Argentina) and can be used with other meats e.g. beef (especially veal), or pork fillet.

Chicken pieces browned in a thick based pot (Le Creuset style) with ½ jar/tin of pitted green olives and some lemon zest. Use a wooden spoon to scrape off the caramelised bits and then add water, few sprigs of thyme. Bring to boil, turn down heat and slow cook with lid on.

Chicken (warm or cold) with walnut salad or with watercress and olives

Chicken tikka masala: this is for a large serving for about 6 people (but can be frozen). (a) The curry paste: in a food-processor blend already roughly chopped 1 de-seeded chili and large knob of peeled, fresh ginger. Add 2 tsp each ground cumin and coriander, 1 tsp each of turmeric, paprika and garam masala and the seeds from 4 cardamom pods. Add a little garlic-infused olive oil to make paste; (b) soften 4 red sweet peppers in oil, add paste and cook off until you smell the spices. Add cubed chicken (8 breasts) and cook for 5-10 minutes. A pinch of asafoetida powder at this stage is good, if you have it (no more than 1/8 of a level tsp). Then add a tin of tomatoes and small tin of tomato puree. Add 200ml water, cover and cook for 20 minutes. Stir in 150ml cream and 150ml plain yoghurt and 2 tbsp maple syrup; heat again for a few minutes. Serve sprinkled with coriander leaves and a little more yoghurt along with white rice. Or, use white fish instead of the chicken

Chicken roasted with peanut butter: Free up the skin over the chicken breast on a whole chicken by sliding your fingers in. Fill and massage into the space on either side with a mixture of 2 tbsp peanut butter, 2tbsp soya sauce, 2 diced chilis, ½ tsp ginger and zest/juice of two limes. Cover the breast with foil and roast at 210C for 20 minutes. Take out of oven, baste the chicken and add 250ml water to the pan (leave foil off). Cook at 180C until cooked (time as per label), basting every 20-30 minutes.

Lamb

Lamb: stab a leg of lamb all over with a steak knife and stick small sprigs of rosemary into the cuts. Then, dress the meat with some anchovies and roast (fish taste disappears leaving saltiness only)

Lamb roasted with lavender: make a paste (using garlic-infused olive oil) from 2 tbsp each of lavender leaves from the garden/park (wash them!) and lemon-thyme with fine zest of 1 lemon, salt. Rub all over a leg of lamb and roast

Lamb meatballs: mix mince with chopped flat-leaf parsley and finely chopped rosemary with a small amount tomato puree and 1/8 tsp asafoetida (if you have it). Fashion the balls and fry-brown. Add tomato sauce (see below) and slow cook with lid on. Serve with toasted almond flakes (few) and plain yoghurt with diced mint and coriander

Lamb braised and then stewed with 1 star-anise, tinned tomatoes/little puree, courgettes-zucchini and sprigs of thyme and rosemary. In place of the tinned tomatoes, better is to make some home-made passata by straining a tin of tomatoes through a coarse sieve and mixing in a little tomato puree to the smooth paste. This can be shop bought but be careful no onion or garlic has been added

Lamb mince browned in garlic-infused oil, layered with aubergine slices (for purists, salted for 20 minutes, rinsed, squeezed dry and fried; for the rest of us, just fried) and then white sauce (made on corn flour) flavoured with fresh, grated nutmeg (a Moussaka)

Lamb mince with added shredded mint leaves and some chili flakes, fried in garlic-infused olive oil, used to stuff an aubergine (or, red pepper) that is then oil-coated and roasted

Lamb tagine: soften a finely chopped onion and 3 cloves finely chopped garlic in about 4 tbsp olive oil. Discard the onion/garlic remnants (you lose some of the oil doing this). Braise lamb-leg chunks in the oil and add ½ tsp cumin, ½ tsp ground ginger, 1 tsp cinnamon. After you smell the spices, add 1 tbsp golden or maple syrup, 500ml water and few strands saffron. Bring to boil, reduce heat and put lid on then simmer for 1 hour. Remove lid, turn heat up a little, reduce sauce for 10-15 minutes, then add tinned chestnuts (discard tin-water and rinse first) and reduce for further 10 minutes. Scatter with chopped coriander and toasted almonds. Serve with white rice, quinoa or spelt "cous cous" (contains gluten)

Lamb pieces braised with crushed cardamom pods, a little garam masala and then stewed with tinned tomatoes/little puree, water and a little table sugar

Lamb chops sprinkled with cinnamon, then grilled or oven roasted

Lamb shanks roasted, then half-way through, place the shank on a bed of fresh or tinned tomatoes. When meat done, remove it, leave it on a plate and cover with foil. Add risotto rice and few cups of boiling water to the tomato mush. Leave in the oven for about 20 minutes whilst meat is resting. Pour meat juice back into the risotto

Lamb rack, seasoned then browned on the fatty side in some olive oil. Coat in Dijon mustard (check label for garlic/onion) and dab the rack into a dinner plate of wheat/gluten-free bread crumbs (or, ground almonds with sesame seeds) mixed with finely chopped mint and rosemary leaves. Roast

Pork & Ham

Pork roasted with bulbs of fennel. Or, any joint of pork rubbed over with a mix of Dijon mustard (check label), grainy mustard, olive oil and fennel seeds, then roasted

Pork and beef mince mixed ("50/50" in Dutch)- great for flavour. Make meat-balls after mixing with chopped sage and oregano leaves, salt & pepper, Worcestershire sauce (and 1/8tsp asofoetido powder, if you have any). Cook in a tomato sauce made from tinned tomatoes and tomato puree that have been cooked together, with little added table-sugar and then coarse-strained to get rid of the bits

Pork mince fried with chili, crushed peanuts and soy sauce. Served in a lettuce leaf with some

chopped coriander and more chopped red chili. If you de-seed the chili and cut out the white bits, you can add a lot of extra chili to get its flavour without the heat

Pork browned in a thick cooking pot then stewed in coconut water and Thai fish sauce with some finely chopped chili. Towards end, take lid off to allow juice to reduce and add chopped coriander

Pork chops fried and when nearly done, add seedless green grapes, allowing them to go mushy

Pork chops rubbed with oil and cumin, then oven roasted

Pork cubes and sweet pepper on a skewer, oven roasted and served with chopped coriander leaves (a full bunch) and home-made "raita" (see below)

Pork cubes marinated in a fridge for as long as you can in plain yoghurt, kiwi-fruit pulp, lime zest, ½ tsp each of ginger powder, ground coriander, cumin and turmeric with pinch cayenne pepper. Thread onto skewers and oven roast or fry in a pan

Pork cubes, braised then mixed with chunks of fresh pineapple and roasted. Serve in a taco shell with coriander and lime juice

Bacon lardons sautéed with sweet peppers-capsicum and served with rice

Ham gammon marinated in cherry-cola (v. small amount residual FODMAPs), or rubbed over with seville marmalade (not low sugar type) and then roasted

Beef

Beef steak lightly cooked then sliced and served on watercress, just using simply the juice as a dressing. Or, if beef a bit light on flavour, drizzle over lime juice mixed with Thai fish sauce and finely chopped chili

Beef chunks and chopped rashers, braised then, sticky bits removed from pan bottom with a wooden spoon and a little vinegar. Add carrot sticks and a little cheap brandy, turn up the heat and flame the brandy. Then slow cook, lid on, with red wine, water, a little tomato puree, pitted black olives (or pickled walnuts) and a little orange zest. Towards end, take lid off to allow the sauce to reduce. Thicken with a little corn flour mixed with water. Serve with mashed potato or fried polenta slices (buy a pack of "instant" polenta, plop it out of its bowl and slice)

Beef cubes, braised then slow-stewed. Towards end add cream, little table-sugar and vinegar with lots of fresh dill

Beef mince fried in olive oil in which finely chopped chilis have been softened, add Thai fish sauce and boil it off. Turn down heat a little adding diced spring onion-scallion green tops, the zest and juice of a lime. Turn heat off and scatter with a good bunch of coriander leaves and serve in ice-berg lettuce leaves

Fish & Shellfish

White fish fried with bacon lardons (chopped up fatty rashers), or capers, or chopped olives

Mussels cooked with finely chopped then sautéed fennel, add a little white wine

Prawns-shrimp (in their shells) fried in butter with chopped tarragon. Or, shelled, uncooked, prawns (use frozen ones) poached in boiling water/juice ½ lemon, jumbled with cooked black rice and drizzled with oriental dressing (see below)

Salmon, trout or fresh mackerel stuffed with sautéed, finely chopped fennel. Serve with salsa of chopped tomatoes, coriander (or fresh oregano or marjoram), loosened with lime juice

White fish fried with thin slices of Seville orange (bitter ones used for marmalade, usually widely available in January/February)

Fish cakes: poach skinned salmon fillet and smoked haddock fillet, pour off water and add coriander leaves and finely chopped chili. Stir in mashed potato (supermarket bought easiest), butter and salt & pepper. Make patties and fry. Serve with a salsa from below or just sweet & sour sauce

Trout (baked): thinly slice un-peeled potatoes and scatter on a greased roasting tray with 1cm thick coins of peeled carrots and thinly sliced fennel bulb. Drizzle over with cheap olive oil, season and throw in some sprigs of thyme. Roast for about 50 minutes. Brush some trout filets with a small amount of English mustard and rub over with a mix of wheat/gluten-free bread crumbs mixed with olive oil and finely chopped rosemary leaves. Put the trout on top of the potatoes and roast for a further 15 minutes

Crab meat mixed with very finely diced, de-seeded/white bits removed red chilis, coarse salt and fine zest along with juice of a lime. Serve tossed with wheat/gluten-free spaghetti, watercress and some good olive oil

Scallops (remove the crescent-shaped membrane from their sides): de-seed/remove white bit of yellow peppers, very finely slice and soften by frying in butter. Add chopped chives and tarragon with ½ glass white wine, stir few times, remove from heat and season. Put some scallops into ramekins and spoon over the butter sauce. Cover with tin foil and bake for about 15 minutes in a pre-heated oven (230C/450F)

Mackerel fillets (preferably skinned, but doesn't matter): clean and dry the fillets, then using three dinner plates, fully coat them in succession with corn/rice flour, egg beaten with Dijon mustard and finally porridge/rolled oats. Fry in butter. Cajun spice mix could be used instead of the mustard if you can't get it garlic-free

Kedgeree: three pots on the go for this recipe. Poach some smoked haddock in simmering milk (skin down) and steam white rice. At same time, sautee finely sliced de-seeded/white bits removed yellow peppers, add some garam masala and continue to sautee. Remove fish from the milk and flake into the pepper mix along with about 125ml cream. Heat the mix and then add the drained rice along with a bunch of coriander leaves. This is a traditional Anglo-Indian breakfast dish, but more suited nowadays to supper

Salads & Vegetable

Watercress with chopped pak choi and chili, torn mint, basil and coriander with sticks of carrot and cucumber. Add crushed roasted peanuts.

Lettuce with shredded, cold chicken, walnuts and clementine segments and very thin slices radish (Poach the chicken breasts slowly in simmering, salted water, tarragon and thyme sprigs- a tip, if you want to keep chicken moist after stir frying, poach it like this first- "feathering" the chicken. Another tip, if you have time, leave chicken to be roasted sitting overnight (in a fridge) in a large pot of salty water with added sprigs rosemary/thyme- "brining" the chicken)

Oriental coleslaw: finely sliced/shredded white-ordinary cabbage (not Savoy) with equal amount shredded Romaine (the crispy, elongated shaped type of lettuce) green tops of a few spring onions-scallions. Put in a bowl and add in a mix of 2-3 tbsp olive oil, juice of 2 limes (microwaved first for 15 seconds to get max juice out) and 1 tsp Thai fish sauce. Mix in chopped leaves of a bunch of coriander and a couple of tsp toasted sesame seeds. Leave as long as you can in a fridge before using

Bacon lardons, blue cheese and walnut or orange segment salad

Prosciutto ham served with thin slices of fresh pineapple (or the more usual cantaloupe or Gallia melon)

Serrano ham served with slices of Manchego or Parmesan cheese

Parsnips, peeled, halved lengthways, de-cored, par-boiled, cubed and fried. Use in a salad with watercress or rocket-arugula and blue-cheese (takes place of more usual pear; parsnips are best fried, not roasted)

Courgettes-zucchini batons, a mix of green and yellow, oven roasted with olive oil for about 30-40 minutes combined with cooked green beans, chopped flat-leaf parsley and torn basil, tossed with a squeeze of lemon juice

Vegetables

Carrots chopped and cooked in white wine with 2 tsp grainy mustard (check for garlic)

Carrots cut into sticks and then added to a frying pan in which 2 teaspoons of grated ginger has been gently fried in olive oil. Add some water, and simmer until cooked. Discard water and pour in a little sesame oil and soy sauce with a handful of sesame seeds. Some maple syrup can be added. Or raw carrot batons mixed with salted peanuts with a dressing of equal parts red-wine vinegar and ground nut oil (or any neutral oil)

Aubergine-egg plant: cut lengthways in half, brush open face with oil, salt & pepper then fry face-down until browned. Transfer to oven and roast for 30 minutes. Another version is to cross-hatch cut the face of each half and rub in finely chopped chili with soy sauce/oil before frying. Either way the aubergine becomes meltingly juicy

Potatoes peeled, boiled and then mashed with finely chopped green olives, some good-ish olive oil, salt & pepper

Potatoes peeled, boiled and roughly forked over adding a large handful of fresh dill

Patatas bravas: peel and par-boil potatoes. Allow to cool then cube and fry in garlic-infused oil. Cover in a tomato sauce made from tinned tomatoes that have been cooked with a little tomato puree, chopped chili and a teaspoon of table sugar, then sieved smooth

Courgette-zucchini: thickly slice courgettes, put on a greased baking tray, sprinkle with garlic-infused olive oil, season and oven-roast until brown. Place (with juice and oil) over wheat/gluten-free pasta with torn mint and basil leaves

Parsnips, peeled, halved lengthways, de-cored, par-boiled for a few minutes and then fried with bacon/pancetta/lardons

Pineapple (fresh) sliced and roasted (or fried). Maybe sprinkle on some chili flakes before cooking. Serve with gammon or roast pork

Rice: try "black" rice. Turns purple when being cooked (in water like ordinary rice) but has a pleasantly nutty/vinegary flavour

Vegetable tian: a few each of fresh tomatoes, unpeeled potatoes and courgette-zucchini, sliced about 1cm thick then arranged upright in sequence, in an oiled oven-dish. Sprinkle with garlic-infused olive oil, season and toss on sprigs of lemon thyme. Cover with foil and bake for 40 minutes, then remove the foil and continue to bake until vegetables browned at edges.

Celeriac: the big, ugly round root that is celeriac has a beautifully subtle celery flavour. (a) mash: chop up a celeriac root so that you can peel it easily, but keep the pieces in a bowl of water with juice of half a lemon to prevent it going brown. Boil the pieces to cook/soften over about 20 minutes. Place the pieces in a food processor, season and a knob of butter and a little milk. Keep blitzing until very smooth- can take a while. Serve like mashed potato; (b) roasted: clean a celeriac root thoroughly then put it at the intersection of two large pieces of foil arranged like a cross. Rub over with olive oil and season, adding several sprigs of thyme and bruised bay leaves and a few drops of truffle oil. Place 35g (the equivalent of 5 canteen size pats) of butter on top and seal over the foil, put in a roasting tray and oven bake for 2 hours at 190C (375F). Thinly slice and use as a base on which to serve fish or beef. Or, serve with hominy (Mexican corn that has been treated and canned-used a bit like barley)

Aubergine-egg plant: slice some aubergines lengthwise, brush both sides with olive oil and griddle. Then wrap each slice around a spoonful of finely chopped feta cheese, chili and mint doused in lemon juice

Tempeh (a fermented form of tofu; found as a block in chiller): take out of wrapping and steam for 10 minutes. Then, cut up into chunks and fry. Can be served with pasta, in salads etc.

Dips, salsa, pesto and quick chutney

Tabbouleh: x5 parts chopped flat-leaf parsley x1 part chopped mint with a little cooked quinoa and little de-seeded tomato with lemon juice and olive oil

"Raita"/"Tzatziki": Finely chopped, de-seeded cucumber with finely chopped mint leaves and lime juice (micro-wave the whole lime for 15 seconds at full power first to get more juice). Add in plain (not vanilla) yoghurt

Aubergine-egg plant dip: halve a few aubergines length ways, brush cut surface with oil and fry face down for a few minutes. Transfer to an oven to roast for 40 minutes, then when slightly cooled, scoop out the centres into a food processor and blend with olive oil, lemon juice and salt/pepper

Pineapple (fresh) with chili pepper, both finely chopped in a little olive oil

Tomato, de-seeded and finely chopped with lime-juice (that's it!). Serve with plain tortilla chips

Tomato, de-seeded and finely chopped with finely chopped coriander and lime juice/olive oil. Add a little table-sugar

Cucumber, de-seeded and diced with chopped clementines (remove as much white pith as you can), toss with finely chopped mint and coriander leaves and squeeze on lime juice

Pesto: blitz in a food processor toasted pine nuts (or roasted, blanched almonds for south Italy version) with big bunch of basil and some garlic-infused olive oil. Once blended, then fork-in grated parmesan. For pistou (French version), leave out the nuts. For a version with a twist, swap rocket-arugula for basil and use some ricotta in place of half the parmesan. Refrigerate in a cup or small container with a covering of olive oil to keep fresh (for about a week)

Pesto Vietnam-style: coriander blitzed with roasted peanuts and chilli with peanut oil, Thai fish-sauce and lime juice. Serve on rice or wheat/gluten-free soba noodles

Oriental dressing: soy sauce, lime juice, rice-wine vinegar, Thai fish sauce, grated fresh ginger, maple syrup, chopped coriander

Rhubarb compote (fantastic as a savoury dish): chop stems into 3cm lengths, stew lightly (to keep the shape) with juice and a little zest of an orange with a little sugar and butter. Serve with pork, oily fish or wheat/gluten-free ravioli. (Remember, do not eat rhubarb leaves)

Lemon and anchovy dressing: blend ½ jar anchovies with juice of a lemon and slowly drizzle in about 1 tbsp olive oil to loosen. Season with salt/pepper. Use on fish, chicken, salad

Herb dressing: leaves of basil, coriander, flat-leaf parsley and spring-onion-scallion green tops with chives blended with mayonnaise, juice of 2 lemons, 1tbsp maple syrup/golden syrup and enough olive oil to loosen. Season with salt/pepper

Mayonnaise (check for onion powder) mixed with tinned tuna (use with cold chicken slices). No Veganaise! Also, mayonnaise mixed with torn (not chopped!) basil leaves

Lemons, halved, then oven roasted until browned (can also fry face down in olive oil). Use the juice with some added fresh oregano or marjoram (similar fragrant lemony flavour) over chicken, fish or pork

Romesco sauce: brush with oil and chargrill 2 whole sweet red peppers-capsicum until skin burns black (takes quite a while), then peel-off the skin (easier to do if you let the peppers sweat in a plastic bag whilst cooling) and discard along with stalk and seeds. Once cooled, put them in a blender with 3 tbsp blanched almonds that have been toasted and allowed to cool (stick on another baking tray in oven at same time as peppers- but will be done first) along with salt & pepper, 1 tsp vinegar (preferably sherry) and 3 tbsp garlic infused oil. Best if you can sieve before use. Serve with pasta

Pickled vegetable chutney: equal parts finely diced carrots, red pepper, gherkins, green olives with some chopped capers, a bunch of chopped flat-leaf parsley, a good pinch of cayenne pepper and about six chopped anchovy filets. Add 1 tbsp. red-wine vinegar and enough olive oil to make a paste

Rhubarb and cucumber pickle: finely slice pink rhubarb stems and de-seeded, peeled cucumber. Mix with some salt and after about 30 minutes toss with rocket-arugula, mint leaves and squeeze over with lemon juice. As this can be a little sharp, you can mix the lemon juice with some maple syrup. Try with salmon or with cold pork or lamb in a wheat/gluten-free wrap

Vegetable "No-No's"

Pulses (most beans, inc. baked beans), chickpeas, lentils,
Onion, shallots, spring onion/scallions (white part), leeks
Broccoli, Savoy cabbage, cauliflower, Savoy cabbage, dandelion leaves
Mange-tous (snow peas), asparagus, artichoke,
Butternut pumpkin-squash
Beetroot-beets, sun-dried tomatoes
Avocado
Mushrooms

Fruit

All large servings of any fruit
All dried fruits (apart from banana)
All tinned fruits
Apples, pears (inc. Asian-nashi, custard)
Sweetsop, soursop
Grapefruit (?small amount maybe), blackberries, boysenberry, naseberry
"Stoned" fruits: peaches, plums, nectarines, apricot, mango, cherries, lychee, longon, rambutan
Watermelon, pomegranate, persimmon
Ackee

Vegetable "Go aheads"

Cucumber, tomatoes, sweet-peppers-capsicum, green beans, alf-alfa, bean sprouts, cress,
Courgette-zucchini, aubergine-eggplant, Radish, daikon, spring onion (green part only), carrots, fennel, olives, capers (few only)
Potatoes, turnip, parsnip, yam, pumpkin-squash (not butternut), taro-dasheen, okra, plantain
bamboo shoots, water chestnuts, chestnuts
Lettuce, rocket-arugula, radicchio (?maybe), watercress, spinach, endive-chicory-witlof (leaves only) , chard-silver-beets, kale, calaloo, white-ordinary cabbage
Choko-cho cho-chayote, choy sum, pak choi,

Fruit

(Limit amount of even "good" fruit)
Blueberries (few only), raspberries (few only), strawberries (few only), banana (ripe best), pineapple (fresh only), melon (honey dew-rock melon, canteloupe, Galia), grapes (few, all colours), oranges, clementines, mandarins, kiwi fruit, rhubarb, passion fruit, papaya, tangelo, pomelo, cranberries, prickly-pears (only type of pear!), durian, dragon fruit, carambola-star fruit, jackfruit