

quinoa tabbouleh

The world has embraced hummus, but its traditional partner tabbouleh often gets overlooked. I love Middle Eastern food and a good tabbouleh is divine. However, I wanted to experiment by substituting the typical bulgur wheat with quinoa to make a gluten-free version. It worked! I made this with flat-leaf Italian parsley, but curly works just as well and is more classic. **SERVES 4 TO 6**

LEMON DRESSING

¼ cup fresh lemon juice

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

¼ teaspoon garlic powder

SALAD

½ cup white quinoa, rinsed

1 cup diced tomatoes

4 cups chopped fresh Italian parsley leaves

5 scallions, chopped

2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint leaves

- 1 To make the dressing: In a small bowl, combine the lemon juice, oil, and garlic powder and whisk with a fork to combine.
- 2 For the salad: Cook the quinoa according to package directions, making sure all the water is absorbed. Set aside to cool.
- 3 In a large bowl, combine the quinoa, tomatoes, parsley, scallions, and mint. Pour in the dressing and toss well to combine.

heidi's salad

My older sister Heidi was the first one of us to go to California and come back with a new way of cooking and eating in the early '70s. This salad dressing, along with her signature salad, has become a family tradition, and it is so colorful that it reminds me of her paintings. I especially crave it with a good crispy, gooey serving of homemade mac and cheese (page 83). **SERVES 6 TO 8**

SOY DRESSING

2 teaspoons soy sauce or tamari

1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

1 small clove garlic, smashed

SALAD

4 cups torn romaine lettuce leaves

1 cup chopped green beans

½ cup sliced carrots

½ cup fresh or thawed frozen peas

1 cup finely sliced red cabbage

¼ cup chopped fresh dill leaves

- 1 To make the dressing: In a small bowl, combine the soy sauce, lemon juice, oil, and garlic and whisk with a fork to combine.
- 2 For the salad: In a large bowl, combine the lettuce, beans, carrots, peas, cabbage, and dill. Remove the garlic from the dressing and discard. Pour the dressing over the salad and toss to combine.



slow 'n' crispy mac 'n' cheese

This is how my mom made mac 'n' cheese. It works really well as a big party dish as well as a weeknight dinner. My favorite part is the crispy topping. You can leave out the pine nuts if you prefer. SERVES 6

1 pound elbow or rotini pasta

8 ounces cheddar cheese, shredded

4 ounces Colby cheese, shredded

1 cup whole milk

3 tablespoons butter

Salt

CRISPY TOPPING

½ cup coarse dried breadcrumbs (see page 338)

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil or melted butter

¼ cup pine nuts (optional)

1 Preheat the oven to 350°F.

2 Cook the pasta according to package directions. Drain and return to the pot.

3 Add the cheeses, milk, butter, and salt to taste to the pasta and stir until the cheese is melted and everything is combined. Spread the mixture in a 12 × 8-inch baking dish.

4 To make the crispy topping: In a small bowl, mix to combine the breadcrumbs, oil, and pine nuts (if using). Sprinkle the breadcrumb mixture over the pasta. Transfer to the oven, and bake for 40 minutes, or until golden and bubbling.

asparagus and lemon cream pasta

This is a fresh and delicious pasta dish to make in the springtime when asparagus is in peak season. It's nice for entertaining or for a quick, luxurious, and easy vegetarian dinner. SERVES 4

1 pound linguine

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

2 tablespoons butter

1 red onion, chopped

1 clove garlic, chopped

1 bunch asparagus, trimmed and cut into thirds

1 cup heavy (whipping) cream

1 lemon

Salt

Chopped fresh mint and Italian parsley leaves, for serving

Grated Romano cheese, for serving

- 1 Cook the linguine according to package directions.
- 2 Meanwhile, in a large skillet, heat the oil and butter over medium-low heat. Add the onion and garlic and cook for 4 to 5 minutes, until soft. Add the asparagus and stir to combine.
- 3 Add the cream, increase the heat to medium, and bring to a simmer, stirring occasionally.
- 4 Finely grate the lemon zest into the sauce, reserving the lemon. Drain the pasta and add to the skillet. Toss to combine and cook until just heated through. Remove from the heat.
- 5 Halve the lemon and squeeze the juice over the pasta. Serve sprinkled with salt, mint, and parsley. Pass grated Romano at the table.

clam linguine

There are two types of clam sauces: creamy and noncreamy (not counting the tomato-based sauce that I don't really care for). This one is creamy. This is a quick, delicious, and comforting clam sauce that just makes you feel good. SERVES 4 TO 6

1 pound linguine

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

2 tablespoons butter

2 cloves garlic, chopped

1 pound chopped fresh clams

1 cup heavy (whipping) cream

½ cup grated Romano cheese

¼ cup chopped fresh Italian parsley leaves

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

- 1 Cook the linguine according to package directions.
- 2 Meanwhile, in a large skillet, heat the oil and butter over medium-high heat. Add the garlic and cook, stirring, for 1 minute, or until golden. Add the clams and cook, stirring, for 5 minutes.
- 3 Add the cream and ¼ cup of the Romano and heat until it just comes to a boil.
- 4 Drain the pasta and add to the skillet with the parsley and salt and pepper to taste and toss to combine. Divide among plates and pass the remaining grated Romano at the table.

TIP: If you like it spicy, simply add a little cayenne pepper to the sauce. If you've got kids who don't like things too spicy, just bring the cayenne pepper to the table and let everyone spice things up as much as they want.

chilled peanut noodles

I'm not a huge fan of peanut butter. But every once in a while I get a craving. And in the summer, it's nice to eat a cold, savory, and satisfying dish. I think this recipe originally came from the Moosewood Cookbook. I have an old Xerox of the recipe in my recipe notebook, covered in sticky stuff. But I've made a few alterations. For example, I don't include the sprouts from the original recipe. SERVES 6

1 pound soba noodles or whole wheat spaghetti

½ cup smooth peanut butter

2 tablespoons hot water

3 tablespoons soy sauce

2 tablespoons rice vinegar

1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil

1 tablespoon hot chili oil (optional)

1 cucumber, halved lengthwise and sliced into half-moons

Black or white sesame seeds, for garnish

Chopped fresh cilantro leaves and scallions, for garnish

Lime wedges, for serving

- 1 Cook the noodles according to package directions. Drain, rinse under cold water, and transfer to a large bowl. Set aside.
- 2 In a bowl, whisk together the peanut butter, hot water, soy sauce, vinegar, sesame oil, and chili oil (if using).
- 3 Add the sauce to the noodles and toss to coat. Add the cucumber and toss to combine.
- 4 Refrigerate the noodles for 2 hours to chill. Toss before serving, adding more peanut butter thinned with warm water if the noodles seem dry. Garnish with sesame seeds, cilantro, and scallions. Serve with lime wedges.



nana's lentil soup

Rita Cinquino always had a pot of soup on the stove when we came to visit. One of my favorites was this lentil soup, and it's so easy to make. She would serve it with kluski noodles (soft egg noodles) or rice. If using, cook the noodles separately and add them to the soup at the end of the cooking time. With simple ingredients, this soup never fails to fill the house with an incredible aroma. **SERVES 6 TO 8**

1 pound brown or French green lentils

1 onion, chopped

½ cup chopped carrots

½ cup chopped celery

3 cloves garlic, chopped

Leaves from a few sprigs fresh Italian parsley

1 bulb fennel, trimmed, cored, and chopped (optional)

8 cups water or chicken stock, low-sodium store-bought or homemade (page 111)

1 cup chopped fresh tomatoes or canned crushed tomatoes

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Grated Romano cheese, for serving (optional)

- 1 In a large soup pot, combine the lentils, onion, carrots, celery, garlic, parsley, fennel (if using), and water or stock. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer for 45 minutes.
- 2 Add the tomatoes and simmer for another 15 minutes.
- 3 Season with salt and pepper to taste and stir to combine. Ladle into bowls. If desired, pass grated Romano at the table.

the simplest tomato soup

I grew up in the Andy Warhol generation of tomato soup—it came from a can. The best tomato soup I have ever eaten was made with four ingredients: tomatoes, butter, salt, and a little olive oil. It was from a place called *The Kitchen* in Boulder, Colorado. I re-create it all the time. This is a basic soup to which you can add any number of things. Cream if you want it creamy. Fresh herbs such as basil and parsley. Think of Andy Warhol. The soup is the canvas, and you are the artist. Serve with crusty bread or a grilled cheese. **SERVES 2**

4 tomatoes, chopped

4 tablespoons (½ stick) butter

Salt

Extra virgin olive oil, for serving

- 1 If you prefer a smooth soup, puree the tomatoes in a blender until smooth.
- 2 In a medium saucepan, melt the butter over medium heat. Add the tomatoes and salt to taste and simmer for 10 minutes. Divide between bowls and drizzle with a little oil.

banana cake

I've been making banana muffins for years, but don't often crave that ubiquitous style of banana cake with cream cheese frosting. (I think it's a bit overdone.) But I had a craving one birthday, and given that I knew my oldest daughter, who has never eaten or touched a banana in her life, wasn't likely to bake me one, I baked it myself. **SERVES 6 TO 8**

Butter and flour,
for the pans

2 cups all-purpose
flour

1 teaspoon baking
powder

½ teaspoon baking
soda

1 cup sugar

½ teaspoon salt

1 stick (4 ounces)
unsalted butter, at
room temperature

2 large eggs,
lightly beaten

⅓ cup buttermilk
(see Basic Baking
Tips, page 286)

1 teaspoon pure
vanilla extract

2 very ripe
bananas, mashed

1½ batches Banana
Buttercream
Frosting (page 327)

- 1 Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease and flour two 9-inch round cake pans.
- 2 Sift the flour, baking powder, and baking soda into a large bowl. Add the sugar and salt and mix to combine.
- 3 Add the butter, eggs, buttermilk, vanilla, and bananas and beat with a hand mixer until well combined, about 6 minutes. The mixture may seem a little dry. This is normal.
- 4 Spread the batter into the prepared pans and bake for 15 to 20 minutes, until a skewer inserted in the center comes out clean. Let cool for 5 minutes in the pans, then turn out onto a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5 Place one of the layers on a cake plate. Spread with one-third of the frosting. Top with the second layer and frost the top and sides of the cake with the remaining frosting.



FROM THE BLOG

"Delicious! Made it last night with the sad old bananas that were just about ready to give up and drop off their perch in exhaustion. Cheers all around from the crowd!" —RENEE

my mother's hickory nut cake

This cake is a family classic my mother made often, and this wouldn't be a family cookbook without it. **SERVES 8 TO 10**

Butter, for the pans

1 stick (4 ounces)
unsalted butter, at
room temperature,
plus extra for the
pans

1½ cups sugar

1 teaspoon pure
vanilla extract

2 cups cake flour

2 teaspoons
baking powder

¼ teaspoon salt

¾ cup whole milk

4 large egg whites,
beaten to stiff
peaks (see
page 337)

1 cup finely
chopped hickory
nuts

Buttercream
Frosting (page 327)

- 1 Preheat the oven to 375°F. Grease two 9-inch round cake pans and line the bottoms with rounds of parchment paper.
- 2 In a large bowl, using a hand mixer, beat the butter, sugar, and vanilla on medium speed until light and fluffy, about 2 minutes.
- 3 Sift the flour, baking powder, and salt into a separate bowl.
- 4 Alternately add the flour mixture and milk to the butter mixture, mixing well after each addition until combined.
- 5 Gently fold in the egg whites and nuts with a spatula.
- 6 Divide the batter between the prepared pans and bake for 30 minutes, or until a skewer inserted in the center comes out clean. Let cool completely in the pans on a wire rack.
- 7 Remove the cakes from their pans and place one layer on a cake plate. Spread with one-third of the frosting. Place the second layer on top and frost the top and sides of the cake with the remaining frosting.

aussie anzac biscuits

The Anzac biscuit (biscuit is what they call a cookie Down Under) is a love letter in baked form. Anzac stands for Australia New Zealand Army Corps, and it was the official biscuit that women sent to their menfolk who went off to war. The recipe is made without eggs so that it would last a long time without spoiling. As I tasted my first home-baked Anzac, I thought of all the women who had made these, not knowing what might happen to their loved ones. **MAKES 3 DOZEN COOKIES**

1½ cups rolled oats

1 cup coconut sugar (or granulated sugar)

1 cup unsweetened shredded coconut

½ cup all-purpose flour

½ cup whole wheat flour

¾ teaspoon baking soda

¼ cup boiling water

1 stick (4 ounces) unsalted butter, melted

¼ cup golden syrup or honey (see Tip)

Tip: These are traditionally made with golden syrup instead of honey.

- 1 Preheat the oven to 350°F. Lightly grease 2 baking sheets or line with parchment paper.
- 2 In a large bowl, mix together the oats, sugar, coconut, and flours.
- 3 In a small bowl, dissolve the baking soda in the boiling water. Stir in the melted butter and honey.
- 4 Add the butter mixture to the dry ingredients and mix well to combine.
- 5 Drop the dough by tablespoons onto the prepared baking sheets and press to flatten into 2½-inch rounds (allowing room to spread). Bake, in batches if necessary, for 15 minutes, or until golden. Transfer to a wire rack to cool.



FROM THE BLOG

"Oh, yes! I love these . . . butter and coconut . . . could anything be more wonderful. I also love the story. Years ago I cut an article out of the LA Times food section about traditional cookies (biscuits) from Down Under. I think I'll have to dig it out!" —JUDI

chocolate chip and brown butter oat cookies

Born out of my obsession with coconut, these cookies took an even better turn when I decided to add oats. They are absolutely delicious. And they're completely nourishing since they're organic and made with whole wheat flour. And now that we know that even butter is healthy—which I have known all along—they feel positively virtuous.

MAKES 4 DOZEN COOKIES

2 sticks (8 ounces) unsalted butter

¾ cup packed light or dark brown sugar

½ cup coconut sugar

1¼ cups whole wheat flour

1 teaspoon baking soda

Pinch of salt

1 cup steel-cut oats or rolled oats

1 cup unsweetened shredded coconut

9 ounces semisweet chocolate chips

2 large eggs, lightly beaten

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

- 1 Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
- 2 In a medium skillet, melt the butter over high heat and cook for 5 minutes, or until browned. Set aside to cool.
- 3 In a large bowl, stir together the sugars, flour, baking soda, and salt. Stir in the oats, shredded coconut, and chocolate chips and mix well to combine. Add the browned butter, eggs, and vanilla and mix to combine.
- 4 Drop the dough by tablespoons onto the lined baking sheets, leaving room for the cookies to spread. Bake, in batches if necessary, for 10 to 15 minutes, until golden and crisp on the edges. Transfer to a wire rack to cool.

orange-cranberry muffins

*I love this flavor combination, especially in fall when the cranberries are fresh. I prefer the unsweetened juicy tartness of fresh cranberries here. You can make mini muffins or even a loaf with the batter—just make sure you adjust the baking times, baking until a skewer inserted comes out clean. **MAKES 12 MUFFINS***

Butter, for the pan
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup whole wheat flour
½ cup granulated sugar
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon baking powder
1 tablespoon finely grated orange zest
½ cup fresh orange juice
⅓ cup unsalted butter, melted
1 large egg
2 cups fresh cranberries or
1 cup unsweetened dried cranberries
Turbinado sugar (optional), for sprinkling

- 1 Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease 12 cups of a muffin tin or line with paper liners.
- 2 In a bowl, mix together the flours, granulated sugar, baking soda, salt, and baking powder. Add the orange zest, orange juice, melted butter, and egg and mix well to combine. Fold in the cranberries.
- 3 Divide the batter among the muffin cups. If desired, sprinkle the tops with turbinado sugar. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, until a skewer inserted in the center comes out clean. Transfer to a wire rack to cool.

spiced pumpkin muffins

If I'm going to bake something, I want it fast. That's why I use my mini muffin pans for most quick breads and muffins. (Who has time to wait for a whole loaf to bake?) I like my pumpkin a little gingery and filled with spices; these little things taste like fall.

MAKES 24 MINI MUFFINS

Butter, for the pan
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup whole wheat flour
1 cup granulated sugar
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
¼ teaspoon ground cloves
¼ teaspoon ground ginger
¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 cup Pumpkin Puree (page 325) or canned organic puree
⅓ cup unsalted butter, melted
⅓ cup maple syrup
1 large egg, lightly beaten
1 tablespoon molasses
Turbinado sugar, for sprinkling

- 1 Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease 24 cups of a mini muffin tin.
- 2 In a large bowl, mix together the flours, granulated sugar, baking soda, salt, baking powder, and spices. Add the pumpkin puree, melted butter, maple syrup, egg, and molasses and mix well to combine.
- 3 Divide the batter evenly among the muffin cups. Sprinkle the tops with turbinado sugar. Bake for 15 to 18 minutes, until a skewer inserted in the center comes out clean. Transfer to a wire rack to cool.

TIP: You can make standard muffins or even a loaf with this mixture—just make sure you adjust the baking time, baking them until a skewer inserted comes out clean.