

Hot 'n' Crispy Chicken Cutlets with Kimchi Ranch

Serves 4

PRODUCE

1 garlic clove
1 lemon
1 small bunch chives

DAIRY

¾ cup labneh or plain
whole-milk Greek yogurt

MEAT

2 large boneless, skinless
chicken breasts or
4 chicken cutlets
(about 2 pounds)

PANTRY

2 cups kimchi, plus
3 tablespoons kimchi brine
1 tablespoon plus
2 teaspoons onion powder
1¼ teaspoons cayenne
pepper
Kosher salt
½ cup mayonnaise
2 cups neutral oil, such
as canola, vegetable, or
grapeseed
2 cups panko bread crumbs

My husband is quite possibly the world's greatest buffalo wing fan. The man asks me to make him buffalo wings no less than twice a week. It's rare that I actually do (let's be honest, I never have), but I did promise him there'd be a nod to his favorite guilty pleasure in this book. Chicken cutlets get bathed in Korean kimchi brine, which imparts a fermenty-acidic punch, before they're breaded, shallow-fried, and served with a tangy, garlicky labneh-based condiment that is basically what ranch dressing wishes it could be. What results is a dish that really has nothing to do with buffalo chicken wings at all but is 100 percent Ben Willett-approved. You're welcome, ma babes.

① Marinate the chicken:

- ✦ In a medium bowl, whisk together ¼ cup labneh, 3 tablespoons kimchi brine, 1 tablespoon onion powder, and 1¼ teaspoons cayenne pepper.
- ✦ Pat 2 chicken breasts dry and slice each in half lengthwise to create 2 thin cutlets. Season the cutlets all over with 2 teaspoons salt and transfer to the marinade, turning to coat. Marinate the chicken at least 15 minutes at room temperature and up to 8 hours in the fridge.

② Make the kimchi ranch:

- ✦ In a small bowl, whisk together ½ cup mayonnaise, 2 teaspoons onion powder, and ½ cup labneh.
- ✦ Finely grate 1 garlic clove and zest half of a lemon into the labneh-mayo mixture. Cut the lemon into wedges and set them aside for serving.
- ✦ Thinly slice half of the chives and stir them into the ranch. Slice the remaining chives on the bias into 1½-inch(ish)-long matchsticks for garnishing later.
- ✦ Finely chop ¾ cup kimchi and stir it into the ranch. If it looks a little thick, add a splash or two of water until it is swooshable and spreadable. Season with salt.

③ Heat the oil: In a large Dutch oven, heat 2 cups neutral oil over medium heat; the oil should be about 1½ inches deep. It's ultimately going to need to reach about 400°F,

so use a deep-frying thermometer to check from time to time and adjust the heat as needed to maintain that temp. If you don't have a thermometer, throw a few pieces of panko in the oil, and if they sizzle like cray, you're in the right ballpark for frying.

④ Bread the chicken:

- ✦ Place 2 cups panko in a medium bowl.
- ✦ Working one at a time, use tongs to dip each chicken cutlet into the panko and use your fingers to press and pack the panko onto the chicken until very well coated. Transfer to a plate.

⑤ Fry the chicken:

- ✦ Line a rimmed baking sheet or a large plate with paper towels.
- ✦ Once the oil reaches 400°F, working in 2 batches, fry the chicken cutlets until deeply golden brown all over, flipping halfway through, 3 to 5 minutes per side.¹
- ✦ Transfer the cutlets to the paper-towel-lined baking sheet and season well with salt.² Transfer the cutlets to a cutting board and slice across the grain (perpendicular to the point of the breast) into ½-inch-thick pieces.

⑥ Plate 'em up: Spread some kimchi ranch on each plate, add the cutlets and the remaining 1¼ cups kimchi, top with the reserved chives, and serve extra ranch alongside.

¹ Adding them all at once will drastically reduce the oil temperature, and they won't get all golden brown and crisp, which would truly be a bummer.

² As a general rule, anything that gets fried in oil should be seasoned as soon as it comes out of the oil, for best salt stickage.



Minty Lamb Meatballs with Crispy Cabbage & Tahini Sauce

Serves 4

PRODUCE

1 medium green or red
cabbage (about 2 pounds)
3 garlic cloves
1 cup mint leaves
1 lemon

DAIRY

1 egg

MEAT

1 pound ground lamb

PANTRY

5 tablespoons extra-virgin
olive oil

Kosher salt and freshly
ground black pepper

$\frac{2}{3}$ cup panko bread
crumbs

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup plus 2 tablespoons
tahini

$1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons ground
cumin

While some might say the meatballs are the stars of this dish, I say it's the cabbage. If you've never roasted cabbage until all of its moisture has been driven off and it's been rendered charred and crisp, then you are in for a treat. This recipe employs not one but two baking sheets, allowing you the control to achieve a range of different textures (juicy, perfectly cooked meatballs and crispy charred cabbage) within the finished dish. The Middle Eastern-style minty lamb meatballs are extra juicy thanks to the tahini and olive oil mixed into them, so you don't have to worry about drying them out as they cook.

- ① Position one rack in the upper third of your oven and a second one in the middle. Preheat the oven to 450°F.
- ② **Prep the cabbage:**
 - ✦ Quarter 1 medium cabbage through the root end. Trim out the core of each quarter. Cut each quarter in half crosswise to create 8 pieces total. Separate all of the leaves and scatter them across 2 rimmed baking sheets—it's okay if they overlap.
 - ✦ Drizzle each baking sheet with 2 tablespoons olive oil and season each with $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt and lots of black pepper. Use your hands to massage the oil into the cabbage so that it's evenly distributed. Roast the cabbage until it is charred in some places and has lost some of its volume, 13 to 15 minutes. Remove from the oven and combine all of the cabbage on one baking sheet, reserving the other pan for the meatballs.
 - ✦ Increase the oven temperature to 500°F.
- ③ **Meanwhile, make the meatballs:**
 - ✦ In a large bowl, lightly beat 1 egg. Add $\frac{2}{3}$ cup panko, 2 tablespoons tahini, $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons ground cumin, $1\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoons salt, and 1 tablespoon olive oil and whisk to combine.
 - ✦ Finely grate 2 garlic cloves into the panko mixture.
 - ✦ Chop $\frac{1}{2}$ cup mint leaves and add them to the mixture along with about $\frac{1}{4}$ pound ground lamb. Use your

hands to gently mix the panko mixture into the lamb until it is evenly distributed and no pockets of panko remain—beware of overworking the mixture or the meatballs may get tough. Mix in the remaining $\frac{2}{3}$ pound ground lamb.¹

- ✦ Roll the meatball mixture into 12 equal-size balls about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide. Arrange the meatballs on the empty baking sheet.
- ④ **Cook the meatballs and cabbage:** Return both baking sheets to the oven, placing the meatballs on the top rack to encourage better browning.² Roast until the meatballs are browned and bounce back when you press on them gently and the cabbage is mostly charred and crisp, 7 to 9 minutes. If the cabbage looks like it could use a few more minutes, leave it in the oven and pull out only the meatballs to avoid overcooking them.
 - ⑤ **Meanwhile make the tahini sauce:** While the meatballs roast, stir together $\frac{1}{2}$ cup tahini, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water, the juice of 1 lemon, and $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt in a small bowl. Finely grate 1 garlic clove into the tahini. Whisk the sauce to combine. It should have a pourable consistency; if it looks too thick, whisk in another splash of water.
 - ⑥ **Assemble and serve:** Spread some of the tahini sauce on each plate, and top with the cabbage, meatballs, and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup mint leaves.

¹ It's best to begin by adding a small amount of lamb to encourage even distribution of the panko mixture, introducing more only once it's been evenly dispersed.

² There won't be a pan hovering above them, which would trap the steam and inhibit browning.

Orzo al Limone

Serves 4

PRODUCE

1 medium yellow onion
1 lemon

DAIRY

5 tablespoons unsalted butter
2½ ounces grated Parmesan cheese (about ¾ cup),
plus more for serving

PANTRY

1 cup orzo
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
Extra-virgin olive oil, for drizzling

If you're a mac-and-cheese, buttered pasta, or risotto fan, look no further for your newest favorite dish. Spaghetti al limone—a classic and supremely simple Italian pasta dish composed of lemon juice, butter, and Parmesan cheese—gets a fresh take, featuring orzo instead of spaghetti, which results in a dish that's somewhere between risotto and macaroni and cheese, and I think it's pretty special. The name of the game here is to avoid overcooking the orzo; leave it slightly al dente so that it doesn't turn into a big pot of mush. I've been on a mission to bring back orzo for the last couple of years and it seems to be an uphill battle, so throw me a bone and jump on board, okay?

① Prep your aromatics:

- ✦ Finely chop 1 yellow onion. **Not sure how to properly chop an onion? I got you.**
- ✦ Using a vegetable peeler, peel 3 (3-inch-long) strips of lemon zest from 1 lemon; set the lemon aside.



② Start the orzo:

- ✦ In a large Dutch oven or pot, heat 3 tablespoons butter over medium heat until melted and foamy.
- ✦ Add the onion and cook, stirring often, until softened but not yet browned, 5 to 7 minutes.
- ✦ Add 1 cup orzo, the 3 strips of lemon zest, and 1 teaspoon black pepper and toast, stirring, for 2 minutes.
- ✦ Stir in 3 cups water and 1 teaspoon salt and bring to a simmer over medium heat. Once the water comes to a simmer, reduce the heat to medium-low and cook, stirring occasionally so the orzo doesn't stick to the bottom of the pot, until most of the water has been absorbed (there should still be some liquid at the bottom of the pot), 6 to 8 minutes. Taste the orzo; it should be al dente but not crunchy.

③ Finish the orzo:

- ✦ Remove the pot from the heat. Stir in 2 tablespoons butter and 2½ ounces grated Parmesan cheese (¾ cup).
- ✦ Finely grate the remaining zest of the lemon into the pot. Cut the lemon in half and squeeze the juice of both halves into the orzo. Taste and add more salt as needed. Add a few more tablespoons of water, if needed, until it's very creamy and loose.¹

④ Serve: Drizzle the orzo with olive oil and season with black pepper and more grated Parmesan.

¹ It tends to thicken as you add the cheese and as it cools, so it's better to err on the looser side here.



Farro & Charred Corn Salad with Salted Almonds & Queso Fresco

Serves 4

PRODUCE
½ small red onion
4 ears corn
1 cup mint or basil leaves

DAIRY
4 ounces queso fresco or
feta cheese

PANTRY
Kosher salt
1¼ cups farro
½ cup sherry vinegar or
red wine vinegar
1 tablespoon honey
½ cup extra-virgin
olive oil
½ cup roasted, salted
almonds or hazelnuts
Freshly ground black
pepper

This grain salad is allllll about texture. You've got chewy al dente farro, juicy kernels of charred corn, crunchy salted almonds, and creamy crumbles of Mexican queso fresco all hanging out together, comingling. You'll cook the farro just as you would pasta, which is the easiest, most foolproof way to cook any grain, so feel free to swap in a different one if you've got it on hand. Barley, wheat berries, freekeh, or spelt would all be fab here. The corn gets charred in a cast-iron skillet, but if you've got access to a real-deal grill, by all means, take this operation outside. This is the kind of dish that only improves with time, so make it in advance and let all the ingredients get to know one another—just don't add the herbs until the end, or they will wilt and blacken as they sit in the sherry vinegar, and you really do hate to see that.

① **Cook the farro:** Bring a medium pot of water to a boil. Season well with salt as you would pasta water.¹ Add 1¼ cups farro and boil until cooked through and al dente but not mushy, 20 to 35 minutes. Taste as you go to determine doneness.

② **Meanwhile, pickle the onion:**
+ In a large bowl, whisk together ½ cup sherry vinegar, 1 tablespoon honey, ½ cup olive oil, and 1 teaspoon salt.
+ Peel and thinly slice ½ small red onion through the root end. Add to the dressing and toss to combine.²
+ Once the farro is al dente, drain it in a fine-mesh strainer or colander and rinse with cold water to cool it down. Add the drained farro to the bowl with the pickled onions, tossing to combine.

③ **Char the corn:** Shuck 4 ears of corn. Heat a large dry cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat for several minutes. Add the corn and cook, rotating every few minutes, until charred in spots and bright yellow, 11 to 13 minutes. Transfer the corn to a cutting board to cool. Working one at a time, stand the corn stem-end down in the bowl of farro. Cut the kernels off the cob, starting at the top and working down. Repeat with the remaining corn. **Learn how to do that here.**

④ **Assemble the salad:**
+ Crumble 4 ounces queso fresco into the farro mixture; tossing to combine.
+ Roughly chop ½ cup roasted, salted almonds, then toss into the farro mixture to combine.
+ Tear 1 cup mint leaves into smaller pieces and toss everything together.
+ Season with lots of black pepper. Taste and adjust the seasoning by adding more salt or vinegar as necessary until it all tastes harmonious.

⑤ **Serve:** Serve at room temperature or cover and transfer to the fridge to chill and then eat cold—both ways are delicious, and this salad is perfect as leftovers.



¹ Since you are cooking the farro just like you would pasta, you don't have to worry about nailing the correct amount of water. You'll ultimately drain it.

² We are essentially quick-pickling the red onion in the sherry vinegar dressing, so give it a couple of minutes to sit and pickle.



The Big Italian

Serves 4

PRODUCE

½ small red onion
1 small garlic clove
1½ pounds ripe, juicy tomatoes (any kind)
2 cups basil leaves

DAIRY

8 ounces fresh mozzarella cheese

MEAT

1 (6-ounce) piece spicy salami or soppressata

PANTRY

6 ounces crusty sesame bread or ciabatta (about ½ loaf)
8 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil (½ cup), plus more for drizzling
Kosher salt
¼ cup red wine vinegar
1 teaspoon sugar
¾ cup canned quartered artichokes
12 pickled pepperoncini or other pickled peppers

IMO, when it comes to sandwiches, it really doesn't get more iconic than a fully-loaded Italian hoagie. I've taken all the elements of an Italian sub and turned them into a big shareable panzanella-style salad. Don't worry, there's still plenty of bread. This is a study in how to eat a big-ass sandwich and convince yourself you're actually eating a salad. It's remarkable what the brain can do in the name of consumption. Toasting the bread first dries it out, which means that once it gets tossed with a vinegary dressing, it doesn't turn to total mush. Feel free to mix things up and use whatever deli meats and cheeses you have on hand—mortadella, bresaola, prosciutto, provolone, and Parm would all be excellent choices.

- 1 Preheat the oven to 425°F.
- 2 **Toast the bread:** Cut the bread into 1-inch-thick slices. Tear the slices into roughly 1-inch irregular, craggy pieces and toss them on a large rimmed baking sheet with 2 tablespoons olive oil and ¼ teaspoon salt. Bake until golden brown on the outside and crisp, 12 to 15 minutes. Let cool.
- 3 **Macerate the onions and start the vinaigrette:**
 - ✦ Thinly slice ½ small red onion and add it to a large bowl.
 - ✦ Finely grate 1 small garlic clove into the bowl. Add ¼ cup red wine vinegar, 1 teaspoon sugar, and 1 teaspoon salt and toss to combine.¹
- 4 **Prep and assemble the salad:**
 - ✦ Drain the liquid from ¾ cup canned quartered artichokes and, if they are in oil, rinse them in a fine-mesh strainer and pat them dry. (That oil usually isn't particularly tasty.)
 - ✦ Cut 1 (6-ounce) piece of salami in half lengthwise. Slice it crosswise into half-moons about the thickness of a nickel.
 - ✦ Trim and discard the stems of 12 pepperoncini. Add the artichokes, salami, and pepperoncini to the bowl.
 - ✦ If using large tomatoes, cut them in half. Cut around the core, into irregularly shaped 1½-inch pieces (about the size of your croutons). If using cherry tomatoes, cut them in half. Toss the tomatoes into the bowl to coat them in all those vinegary juices.
 - ✦ Tear 8 ounces mozzarella into pieces about the same size as the tomatoes and add them right to the bowl along with 2 cups basil and 6 tablespoons olive oil.
- 5 **Serve:** Toss everything several times to encourage the bread to soak up the juices. Taste and add more salt if you think it needs it. Drizzle with more olive oil and serve.²

¹ Letting the onion and garlic sit in the vinegar will lightly pickle them and mellow out their raw flavor while you do the rest of your prep.

² The salad can be made and assembled without the croutons and basil up to 4 hours in advance; add them at the last minute, otherwise the croutons will get

overly soggy and the basil will oxidize (turn black) as it sits in the vinegar.



Sneaky Cottage Cheese Salad

Serves 4

PRODUCE

- 1 lemon
- 1 small garlic clove
- 2 Persian cucumbers,
or ½ English (hothouse)
cucumber
- 4 Little Gem lettuce heads
or 3 romaine hearts
- 1 cup dill leaves

DAIRY

- ½ cup full-fat
cottage cheese

PANTRY

- ½ cup walnuts or almonds
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin
olive oil
- Kosher salt and freshly
ground black pepper

This is a sneaky salad. Sneaky because if you just sat down and ate it, you probably would not be able to put your finger on what makes the dressing so sassy. SURPRISE! It's cottage cheese. Cottage cheese has made a major comeback in the last few years, and I for one couldn't be happier about it. Forget everything you thought you knew about the sad, watery, wan diet food of many decades ago, and make this tangy, herbaceous, bright salad of Little Gem lettuce and toasted walnuts that gets bathed in a cottage cheese vinaigrette. A note on Little Gems—they can be tricky to find, but do seek them out whenever you can. They are sweeter, crunchier, and more tender than romaine, not to mention cute as hell. Romaine will do in a pinch.

① Preheat the oven to 325°F.

② **Toast the walnuts:** Spread the walnuts out on a rimmed baking sheet and toast in the oven until deeply golden brown throughout, 8 to 10 minutes. Check to be sure they're toasted all the way through by cracking into one. Let the walnuts cool.

③ **Make the dressing:**

- ✦ Finely grate the zest of about a quarter of a lemon into a large serving bowl. Cut the lemon in half and add the juice from both halves to the bowl.
- ✦ Finely grate 1 small garlic clove into the lemon juice.
- ✦ Whisk in ½ cup full-fat cottage cheese, 3 tablespoons olive oil, and lots of black pepper. Season the dressing with salt.

④ **Prep and assemble the salad:**

- ✦ Cut 2 Persian cucumbers on a bias, rotating the cucumbers as you cut to create 1-inch oblique spears.
- Not familiar with the roll cut? Pull up this quick video and I'll show you.**
- ✦ Chop the toasted walnuts.
- ✦ Trim off the root end of 4 heads of Little Gems and discard any floppy or bruised outer leaves. Separate the leaves from each head. Tear any large leaves in half, leaving the cute little ones whole (rip big romaine leaves in half or into thirds). Wash and dry them thoroughly; transfer to the bowl with the dressing and toss.
- ✦ Tear 1 cup dill leaves into smaller pieces and add to the bowl along with the cucumbers and walnuts, tossing everything until all the leaves are well coated. Season the salad with more salt and black pepper as needed. Serve it up.



Cold & Crunchy Green Beans with Garlicky Pistachio Vinaigrette

Serves 4

PRODUCE

1½ pounds green beans, wax beans, or romano beans
1 small garlic clove
2 lemons

DAIRY

1½ ounces grated Parmesan cheese (about ½ cup)

PANTRY

Kosher salt
¾ cup roasted, salted pistachios
½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
Freshly ground black pepper

Green beans are fibrous and stringy when they're raw, so they almost always benefit from some amount of cooking to help break that down and tenderize them. If you blanch them (a.k.a. boil them) in well-salted water for a few minutes and then immediately plunge them into an ice bath to stop the cooking, they end up tender and snappy but retain their bright green color. Triple win. It also definitely doesn't hurt to then soak said beans in a zippy, bright, garlicky, Parmy vinaigrette and toss them with tons of chopped salted pistachios. Basically, I'm never eating a hot green bean again. I just don't think they're as delicious and refreshing as cold ones, and I'm trying to eat only delicious things in my life.

① Bring 4 quarts water and 1½ cups salt to a boil in a large pot.¹

② Do some prep:

✦ Finely chop ¾ cup roasted, salted pistachios until all the pieces are about the size of a lentil.

✦ Trim the ends of 1½ pounds green beans.

③ Cook the beans:

✦ Once the water boils, stir in the beans and cook until just tender but not limp, 5 to 6 minutes.²

✦ While the beans cook, fill a large bowl with ice and water. Using a spider strainer or tongs, transfer the cooked beans to the ice bath to stop the cooking. Keep them in the ice bath until completely cool.

④ Make the dressing:

✦ Finely grate 1 garlic clove and the zest of 1 lemon into a medium bowl. Cut the zested lemon and a second lemon in half and add the juice from both lemons to the bowl, whisking it all to combine.

✦ Slowly stream in ½ cup olive oil, whisking as you go. Stir in 1½ ounces grated Parmesan cheese (about ½ cup). Season the dressing with salt and lots of black pepper. Stir in the chopped pistachios.

⑤ Drain and assemble:

✦ Drain the beans, then transfer them to a clean kitchen towel and pat dry.³

✦ Add the green beans to the bowl of dressing, tossing well to coat. Taste and add more salt and black pepper if you think it needs it. Serve them up! These are best served very cold, so keep them covered and refrigerated until serving if you're making them in advance.

¹ YES! THAT IS SO MUCH SALT! But the beans are spending only a couple of minutes in the boiling water, and it takes a LOT of salt to penetrate something as fibrous as a green bean. I have tested this outrageous amount of salt, and I promise

you, your beans are going to be perfectly seasoned, NOT salty.

² Taste one and see if it's done—they shouldn't be fibrous or tough to chew, but you also don't want them to be totally

lifeless and mushy. Find that happy, snappy medium.

³ You want them as dry as possible so as not to introduce any water into the dressing we just made, which will dilute the flavor.



K-bas & Cabbage Soup

Serves 4 to 6

PRODUCE	MEAT
6 garlic cloves	12 ounces kielbasa
2 celery stalks	
1 large yellow onion	PANTRY
1 pound green cabbage	¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling
1 cup dill leaves	Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
	3 tablespoons tomato paste
DAIRY	2 (14.5-ounce) cans white beans, such as butter, cannellini, or gigante
Sour cream or plain whole-milk Greek yogurt, for serving	

My love for kielbasa runs pretty freaking deep. It's not just a sausage, it's a lifestyle. Kielbasa is perfectly suited to soup because of the complexity of flavor it lends as it simmers. It's porky, salty, smoky, and fatty, and all of those things go a long way when it comes to soup architecture. Of all the pork products you might find in a hearty soup, kielbasa is by far my favorite, so I encourage you to consider it the next time you reach for Italian sausage for minestrone or ham hocks for split pea. This humble but delicious soup is both an homage to my former NYC nabe and a big fat shout-out to my Bassy Posse—you know who you are.

① Do some prep:

- ✦ Thinly slice 6 garlic cloves.
- ✦ Trim the root ends of 2 celery stalks. Slice the celery crosswise about ¼ inch thick.
- ✦ Chop 1 large yellow onion. **Not sure how? I can help you with that!** Transfer the garlic, celery, and onion to a medium bowl to make space on your cutting board if it's getting jammed up.
- ✦ Quarter a 1-pound cabbage through the root end. Trim out the core of each quarter. Slice the cabbage crosswise into 1-inch-thick strips.
- ✦ Cut 12 ounces kielbasa in half lengthwise. Slice the halves crosswise into ½-inch-thick half-moons.



② Start the soup:

- ✦ Heat ¼ cup olive oil in a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add the kielbasa in a single layer and cook, undisturbed, until golden brown and crisp, 4 to 5 minutes. Give everything a good stir to redistribute the kielbasa and cook 2 to 3 minutes longer.
- ✦ Add the garlic, celery, and onion, reduce the heat to medium, and cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion is translucent, 4 to 5 minutes.

- ✦ Stir in the cabbage, 2 teaspoons salt, and lots and lots of black pepper. Continue to cook, stirring often, until the onion is very soft and beginning to stick to the pot and the cabbage is just tender and not crunchy (grab a piece and taste it!), 4 to 5 minutes.

- ✦ Stir in 3 tablespoons tomato paste and cook until the tomato paste starts to stick to the bottom of the skillet and you hear it sizzle a bit louder, about 2 minutes.

③ Add the beans and broth:

- ✦ Meanwhile, drain and rinse 2 (14.5-ounce) cans of white beans in a fine-mesh strainer.
- ✦ Stir the beans into the pot, using a wooden spoon to smash about ⅓ cup or so of them against the side.¹
- ✦ Stir in 4 cups water. Bring the soup to a simmer over medium-high heat. Once it simmers, reduce the heat to maintain a simmer and cook for 15 minutes, until slightly thickened and the flavors have melded.²
- ✦ Taste and add more salt and black pepper as needed until it starts to taste really good.
- ✦ Chop 1 cup dill leaves and stir them into the soup.

④ Serve:

Ladle the soup into bowls. Serve each bowl topped with a dollop of sour cream, more black pepper, and a drizzle of olive oil.

¹ This will release their starchy insides, and that starch will help thicken the soup.

² The soup should now taste super flavorful, whereas before simmering, it was watery and less developed in flavor. Time is an important ingredient in a good soup.



Blueberry Cornflake Crisp

Serves 6

PRODUCE

6 cups blueberries (about 2½ pints)
1 lemon

DAIRY

½ cup (1 stick/113g) unsalted butter, cold
Vanilla ice cream, for serving

PANTRY

¾ cup firmly packed (147g) plus ½ cup (110g) light brown sugar
1¼ cups (150g) plus 3 tablespoons (22.5g) all-purpose flour
¾ teaspoon (2g) kosher salt
1 teaspoon ground cardamom
1½ cups cornflakes cereal

Blueberries and corn: one of summer's greatest yet most underrated flavor pairings, IMHO. Cornflakes: one of America's most iconic cereals. Cornflakes crushed into a buttery, cardamom-flecked crisp topping strewn over jammy blueberries: perfection. A fruit crisp is one of the laziest, most hands-off summer desserts out there, meaning it's the best kind of dessert when what you really want to do is prioritize leisure time. Blueberries require zero chopping, slicing, or dicing, unlike some of their stone-fruit counterparts, so your only task is to make the crumb topping, which takes all of 5 or 6 minutes. Less than an hour later, you have a bubbling, juicy, fragrant mess of summer deliciousness just begging for a scoop of ice cream.

① Preheat the oven to 375°F.

② **Prep the blueberries:**

✦ In a large bowl, stir together 6 cups blueberries, ½ cup (110g) light brown sugar, 3 tablespoons (22.5g) flour, and ½ teaspoon salt.

✦ Finely grate the zest of half of a lemon into the blueberries. Cut the lemon in half and squeeze the juice of both halves into the blueberries, catching the seeds with your hands. Toss everything well to combine. Transfer to an 8 × 8-inch baking dish or a cast-iron skillet.

③ **Make the crisp topping:**

✦ Wipe out that bowl and use it to put together the topping. Using a wooden spoon, combine 1 teaspoon ground cardamom, 1½ cups cornflakes, 1¼ cups (150g) flour, ¾ cup (147g) light brown sugar, and ½ teaspoon salt, stirring well to combine.

✦ Cut ½ cup (1 stick/113g) cold unsalted butter into ½-inch pieces and add them to the bowl with the dry ingredients. Using your hands, pinch and mix the butter together with the dry ingredients until the mixture holds together in clumps when squeezed in your palm. You'll simultaneously be crushing some of the cornflakes, and that's totally okay. Pile the cornflake crumble over the blueberries, clumping some of the crumble as you do so with your hands to create some larger pieces.

④ **Bake and serve:** Bake until the juices are bubbling around the edges and the crumble is golden brown, 50 to 55 minutes. Serve warm with vanilla ice cream.





Black Sesame Shortbread

Makes 16 cookies

DAIRY

10 tablespoons (1¼ sticks/142g)
unsalted butter

PANTRY

1½ cups (180g) all-purpose flour
⅔ cup (75g) powdered sugar
1½ teaspoons (4g) kosher salt
¼ cup (35g) black or white sesame seeds
⅓ cup (80g) tahini
Granulated sugar, for sprinkling

Would it be possible to create a melt-in-your-mouth, tenderoni shortbread cookie without relying on an electric mixer and the whole butter-creaming thing? I certainly didn't think so. I was sorely mistaken. This is the anti-cookie. The easiest cookie there is. There are six ingredients. Melted butter and tahini get stirred into a mixture of all-purpose flour, powdered sugar, and salt, and voilà, you've got cookie dough. Melting the butter means you don't need any special stand mixers or electric beaters. Powdered sugar contains cornstarch, which lends a very fine, delicate texture to the shortbread without having to rely on the butter-creaming technique to achieve a tender crumb.

- ① Position a rack in the center of the oven. Preheat the oven to 325°F. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
- ② **Melt the butter:** Cut 10 tablespoons (1¼ sticks/142g) unsalted butter into 1-inch pieces. Melt the butter in a small saucepan set over medium heat, swirling occasionally, about 3 minutes. Set aside to cool.
- ③ **Prep the dry ingredients:**
 - ✦ In a medium bowl, whisk together 1½ cups (180g) flour, ⅔ cup (75g) powdered sugar, and 1½ teaspoons (4g) salt.
 - ✦ Place ¼ cup (35g) black sesame seeds in a small resealable plastic bag, seal it, and crush them by smashing them lightly with the side of a wine bottle or a rolling pin. (If you have a mortar and pestle or spice grinder, use it.)¹ Add the crushed sesame seeds to the dry ingredients and whisk to combine.
- ④ **Make the dough:** Whisk ⅓ cup (80g) tahini into the cooled melted butter, then pour the mixture into the dry ingredients, stirring with a spatula until a dough comes together in a rough ball. Using your hands, knead the dough lightly a few times until no floury spots remain.
- ⑤ **Prep the cookies and bake:**
 - ✦ Transfer the ball of dough to the prepared baking sheet and use your hands to pat it into a ½-inch-thick, 8 × 8-inch square. Smooth the surface of the square with the bottom of a measuring cup so that it's nice and flat.
 - ✦ Use a fork to lightly prick the dough all over.² Transfer the baking sheet to the fridge to chill for at least 30 minutes or up to overnight. If chilling overnight, lightly cover the dough with plastic wrap.
 - ✦ Once chilled, cut the shortbread into 16 equal 2-inch squares. Space them out evenly on the baking sheet.
 - ✦ Bake the shortbread until lightly golden brown all over, 30 to 40 minutes. While still warm, lightly sprinkle granulated sugar over the surface of the dough—just enough to evenly coat each square. Let the cookies cool on the baking sheet completely before serving.

¹ This will release some of the oils within the seeds and help flavor the dough.

² This creates little pockets for the steam to escape so that the cookies bake evenly, yielding a very crisp, melt-in-your-mouth texture.

Seedy Sweet Potato & Ginger Snacking Cake

Makes one 12-inch cake

PRODUCE

¾ pound sweet potatoes (about 1 large)
1 (4-inch) piece fresh ginger

DAIRY

2 large eggs
¾ cup (190g) buttermilk

PANTRY

2½ cups (300g) all-purpose flour, plus more for the skillet

2 teaspoons ground cinnamon (6g)

2 teaspoons (6g) kosher salt

1 teaspoon (4g) baking powder

½ teaspoon (3g) baking soda

1½ cups packed (330g) light brown sugar

¾ cup (150g) neutral oil, such as vegetable, canola, or grapeseed, plus more for the skillet

1½ teaspoons (8g) vanilla extract

½ cup mixed seeds, such as pepitas, sunflower seeds, and/or black and white sesame seeds

Conceptually speaking, this sweet potato cake is really no different from a carrot cake. Grated sweet potatoes lend both moisture and sweetness in the same way that carrots would. Technique-wise, this cake couldn't be simpler. Two bowls, a box grater, and a couple of stirs later, and your cake is in the oven. There's freshly grated ginger in the batter, which is much more interesting than ground ginger, if you ask me. You can use any kind of seeds you like for the topping—I happen to love the flavor of toasted sesame seeds with ginger and warm spices, but the world's your oyster in that department.

① Get ready:

- ✦ Position a rack in the center of the oven. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
- ✦ Using a paper towel, lightly grease a 12-inch cast-iron skillet with neutral oil.¹ Sprinkle a few tablespoons flour in the skillet and tap it around to evenly coat, being sure to coat the inside edges. Discard any excess flour.

② Prep your dry and wet ingredients:

- ✦ In a medium bowl, whisk together 2½ cups (300g) all-purpose flour, 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon, 2 teaspoons (5g) salt, 1 teaspoon (4g) baking powder, and ½ teaspoon (3g) baking soda.
- ✦ In a second large bowl, lightly beat 2 eggs, and then whisk in 1½ cups (330g) light brown sugar, ¾ cup (150g) neutral oil, ¾ cup (190g) buttermilk, and 1½ teaspoons (8g) vanilla until homogeneous and very thick.
- ✦ Peel ¾ pound sweet potatoes and coarsely grate them into the dry ingredients on the large holes of a box grater; you should have about 3 cups grated.

- ✦ Finely grate 1 (4-inch) piece of ginger on the small holes of a box grater into the wet ingredients.

③ Combine:

- ✦ Add the dry ingredients to the wet ones. Gently work the ingredients together in large sweeping and folding motions until no floury streaks remain. It's a pretty thick batter, so be sure it's mostly combined.
- ✦ Scrape the batter into the prepared skillet and spread it out using the back of a spoon or spatula into an even layer.
- ✦ Combine ½ cup mixed seeds in a small bowl. Scatter the seeds evenly over the batter.

④ Bake and serve:

- ✦ Bake until a toothpick or cake tester inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean, 45 to 55 minutes. Let cool.
- ✦ Run a small knife around the edge of the cake to help release it from the sides of the skillet. Cut the cake into wedges or squares and serve them right out of the skillet.

¹ If you've only got a 10-inch skillet, that will work, too, though the cake may take a little longer to bake since the pan will be fuller.

Salty Date & Cheddar Biscuits

Makes 8

DAIRY	2 cups (240g) all-purpose flour, plus more as needed
½ cup (1 stick/113g) cold unsalted butter, plus more for serving	2 tablespoons (24g) sugar
6 ounces extra-sharp cheddar cheese	2 teaspoons (6g) kosher salt
1 cup plus 3 tablespoons sour cream	1½ teaspoons (6g) baking powder
1 egg	½ teaspoon (3g) baking soda
	Freshly ground black pepper
PANTRY	Flaky sea salt
6 ounces Medjool dates (about 1 cup)	

I've never met a human who doesn't love a biscuit. And certainly, these sweet/salty/cheesy cheddar-date biscuits will be no exception. The keys to a delicious biscuit are (1) ample fat (butter) to keep them moist, and (2) not overworking the dough, which leads to a tough crumb. Truthfully, it's not all that hard, and the envelope-folding technique you'll learn in this recipe almost guarantees distinct, flaky layers. Keep your ingredients as cold as possible as you make these so that the shards of butter in the dough remain whole and don't melt into it. Cold pockets of butter turn to steam in the oven, which contributes to the biscuits' rise and ultimately their fluffy layers.

- ① Position a rack in center of the oven. Preheat the oven to 425°F. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
- ② **Cut and chill the butter:**
 - ✦ Cut ½ cup (1 stick) cold butter into ½-inch cubes. Transfer them to a small bowl and chill in the fridge until ready to use.
 - ✦ Remove and discard the pits from 6 ounces Medjool dates. Coarsely chop the dates into ½-inch pieces. (Flour your knife if they're super sticky.)
- ③ **Prep the dry ingredients:**
 - ✦ In a large bowl, whisk together 2 cups (240g) flour, 2 tablespoons (24g) sugar, 2 teaspoons (5g) kosher salt, 1½ teaspoons (6g) baking powder, ½ teaspoon (3g) baking soda, and a few generous cranks of black pepper.
 - ✦ Set a box grater right over the bowl of dry ingredients and grate 6 ounces sharp cheddar cheese on the large holes of the grater (you'll have about 2 cups grated). Toss the mixture with your hands to combine everything.
 - ✦ Add the chilled butter pieces to the dry ingredients and, using your fingers, pinch and squeeze the butter into the flour until there are no pieces of butter larger than a pea.
 - ✦ Add the chopped dates to the flour mixture and toss to combine, using your fingers to help separate any date pieces that may have clumped together.
- ④ **Combine, knead, and shape the dough:**
 - ✦ Make a well in the center of the flour. Scrape in 1 cup plus 3 tablespoons sour cream and, using a fork, stir in circular motions until the dough comes together in large clumps.
 - ✦ Using lightly floured hands, knead the dough a few times in the bowl to bring it together into a shaggy mass and incorporate any flour bits at the bottom of the bowl.
 - ✦ Transfer the dough to a lightly floured surface. Knead with the palms of your hands once or twice more to form it into a more uniform mass and incorporate any last floury bits. Don't go too crazy; it just needs to come together, but you should still see some shaggy bits.
 - ✦ Pat the dough into an 8 × 4-inch rectangle. Fold the short edges of the rectangle toward the center and let them overlap, like a tri-fold business letter. Pat the dough back down into another 8 × 4-inch rectangle. Cut the rectangle in half lengthwise, then slice it crosswise into 4 equal pieces to create 8 squares. Transfer to the parchment-lined baking sheet, spacing them out evenly.
 - ✦ Lightly beat 1 egg in a small bowl. Brush the tops of the biscuits with the egg wash and sprinkle with flaky sea salt.
- ⑤ **Bake and serve:**
 - ✦ Bake the biscuits, rotating the baking sheet front to back halfway through to encourage even browning, until lightly golden brown on top, 18 to 22 minutes.¹
 - ✦ Serve warm with more butter and flaky sea salt.

¹ The back of the oven is hotter than the front where the door opens, and it's always a good idea to rotate baked goods so they cook at even rates.

