

WEEK 1, DAY 1

ROASTED EVERYTHING—CHICKEN, BROCCOLI, ONIONS, AND POTATOES

Olive oil, for rubbing
1 tablespoon spice rub of your choice: a combination of garlic and onion powder, seasoning blends, paprika, cayenne pepper, and so on
2 teaspoons table salt, plus more to taste
1 teaspoon ground black pepper, plus more to taste
One 5- to 6-pound chicken (or larger or smaller, depending on your family size; a **SAVE-IT-FORWARD** item)
1 lemon, cut lengthwise into 6 wedges
3 medium yellow onions, 2 cut lengthwise into wedges (a **SAVE-IT-FORWARD** item)
2 to 3 pounds potatoes, peeled (if thick-skinned) and cut into 1½-inch cubes (a **SAVE-IT-FORWARD** item)
2 medium bunches broccoli (about 2 pounds), cut into 1-inch florets
Special tool: extra-wide foil (optional)

Is it strange for me to say that I'm not crazy about the opening recipe in my cookbook? Here's the deal: I'm just not a gal who craves a big hunk of meat; I prefer it as a lesser player in a meal starring grains and veggies. The carnivores in my family, however, violently disagree with me, choosing meals that a caveman would relish. So, it's a dance—the yin and yang of cooking for a family.

1. The chicken will be placed on a lower oven rack and the veggies will be on a higher rack, so adjust your racks accordingly. Preheat the oven to 450°F. Cover two sheet pans with foil to make cleanup easier (extra-wide foil is helpful!).
2. I consider preparing chicken a straight-up biohazard situation, so I take several steps in advance so everything is in place before I get started. Chefs call this *mise en place*, and this is the perfect time to take a tip from the pros. Pour a bit of olive oil in a small bowl. Mix the spice rub, salt, and pepper in another small bowl. You don't want to touch your spice jars with your radioactive chicken hands.
3. Remove all the icky stuff from inside the chicken—you know, that bag of *who knows what that is*. I discard it because I don't want to think about it anymore, but I bet some of you are less squeamish and cheerily repurpose it. I applaud you! In the old days, we were told to rinse chicken, but that's not the new protocol because it drips biohazard liquid everywhere.

Village
Dunshire

4. Dry the chicken thoroughly with paper towels. Carefully separate the skin from the breasts (which will ensure a crispy, pretty skin), rub the chicken with oil, and cover it with the spice rub.
5. Place all the lemon wedges and half an onion, in wedges, in the chicken cavity.
6. Place the chicken on a wire rack (if you have one) in the middle of one of the sheet pans, breast side up, and set the pan on the lower oven rack.
7. Roast the chicken for 15 minutes to create a crispy, pretty skin, then lower the oven heat to 375°F and roast for about 15 minutes per pound. To test the doneness, if you have an instant-read thermometer, insert it at the inner thigh, not touching the bone, and it should read at least 165°F. I generally can't find my thermometer, so I just see if the juices run clear in the thigh area.
8. While the chicken is roasting, toss the potatoes, broccoli, and remaining onion wedges separately with a bit of olive oil to coat lightly, then season with salt and pepper. Add the potatoes on one side of the second sheet pan, the broccoli in the middle, and the onion at the other end so you can remove one vegetable at a time if they cook at different rates.



TO DO TONIGHT:

Place the chicken carcass and skin right into the crock of a slow cooker for Overnight Chicken Broth (page 268).

You'll be using 12 cups of broth this week, and this recipe will make at least that much. With just a little effort, you'll save enough money for a couple of trips to Starbucks!



9. Stick the veggies in the oven on the higher rack to roast. Check them for doneness after 30 minutes and roast longer, if necessary. When each veggie is cooked to your perfection, perhaps at different rates, remove it to a serving platter. Personally, I like mine very browned—particularly the broccoli!

10. When the chicken is done, give it a 10-minute rest, if you can shoo your family away. In terms of carving your chicken, my recommendation is to let everyone snag their favorite part, whether that's the breast, drumstick, thigh—whatever! Though you will save forward the remainder of the chicken, various bits and pieces will be fine for that purpose, so let your family have what they want tonight.

SAVE IT FORWARD—CHICKEN: After your family demolishes the chicken, finish the demolition by removing the rest of the chicken from the bone, placing it in a container, and refrigerating it. (Use the bones and skin in the stock tonight; see **To Do Tonight**). You'll need 1 to 2 cups of chicken for Hearty Chicken Stew (page 14) later in the week. If there are additional leftovers, they can be used for chicken fried rice (see **Lunch Bits and Bobs**, page 10).

SAVE IT FORWARD—POTATOES: If you have leftover potatoes, add them to Almost Niçoise Salmon Salad (page 16) later in the week.

SAVE-IT-FORWARD—ONION: While you are chopping onions, chop one for tomorrow's Brown Rice Pilaf (page 9). No need to shed tears two days in a row!



WEEK 3, DAY 2

ROASTED ASPARAGUS

Fresh asparagus,
preferably medium-size
spears

1 to 2 tablespoons olive
oil, depending on the
amount of asparagus

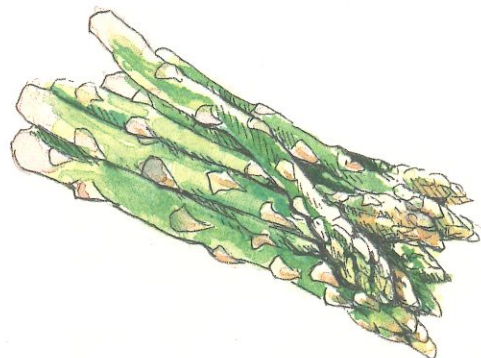
Table salt and ground
black pepper

Lemon juice (optional)

These asparagus are terrific to help round out the Chicken Salad Board (page 44). Make however much you like, but you'll be making hollandaise sauce tomorrow, so any extra roasted asparagus will have a delicious accompaniment.

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F.
2. Line a sheet pan with foil. Place the asparagus on the pan. Drizzle with olive oil, toss, add salt and pepper to taste, and spread the asparagus into a single layer. Roast for at least 10 minutes, until lightly browned; thicker stalks will take longer.
3. If you have a lemon in your fridge, a squirt at the end before serving is nice! These can be served warm or at room temperature.

SAVE IT FORWARD—ASPARAGUS: Save any extra Roasted Asparagus for an accompaniment to Breakfast-for-Dinner Eggs Benedict (page 49).



WEEK 3, DAY 2

ROASTED GRAPES

1 tablespoon olive oil

2 cups seedless red
grapes

Seriously . . . just try these. Once you do, you'll lament all the lost years without them. You'll love them with cheese and crackers as part of your Chicken Salad Board (page 44), but try them the next morning on top of peanut butter toast or mixed into yogurt.

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F.
2. Line a sheet pan with foil. Place the grapes on the pan and toss with the oil. Roast for 20 minutes (but check at 15 minutes if your grapes are small). There's no official done with these: the skin will likely burst on most of them, but just taste to see if they are to your liking.



WEEK 5, DAY 3

GARLICKY BOK CHOY

1 tablespoon olive oil
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
1 pound bok choy, sliced (see Note)
½ cup Overnight Chicken Broth (page 268) or other chicken broth
1 tablespoon soy sauce
2 teaspoons sesame oil (optional)

1. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Heat the olive oil, add the garlic and ginger, and cook for 1 to 2 minutes, until fragrant. Add the bok choy and cook until golden brown on each side, using tongs to turn it. Don't be afraid to let it cook on each side until it caramelizes a bit.
2. Add the chicken broth and soy sauce to the pan and simmer until all the broth cooks off. If the bok choy is not quite tender enough, add a small amount of water and cook a bit longer.
3. Drizzle with the sesame oil, if using, and serve.

NOTE ON BOK CHOY: You can use baby or regular bok choy. For either size, trim the root end and wilted leaves; you may also need to discard outer leaves if they are not in good shape. Bok choy often hides dirt, so rinse well (or even soak for a while in water). Cut baby bok choy in half lengthwise and regular bok choy into quarters lengthwise.



SAVE IT FORWARD—BOK CHOY: If you have leftover bok choy, save it to add to tomorrow's Thai Basil Chicken (page 79).

WEEK 5, DAY 4

THAI BASIL CHICKEN

2 cups cut-up veggies, such as sliced red bell peppers and green beans
Garlicky Bok Choy (page 78), saved forward, sliced
One 13.5-ounce can coconut milk (I use full fat for maximum flavor, but you can use the light version)

1 to 2 tablespoons red curry paste, depending on your heat tolerance

2 cups cooked chicken from Asian Lettuce Wraps (page 77), saved forward
5 to 7 fresh basil leaves (see Note), sliced into thin strips

Cooked jasmine or white rice, for serving

You'll most often find this recipe cooked with chunks of chicken breast but using cooked ground chicken from last night's Asian Lettuce Wraps makes a quick and tasty save-it-forward shortcut! Fresh pineapple is a lovely accompaniment and makes this a full meal.

1. Add a few tablespoons of water to a deep pan and heat over medium-high heat until simmering. Add the veggies (and leftover bok choy, if using) and flash-cook them until tender, tossing frequently and adding water as needed.
2. Add the coconut milk and whisk in the curry paste. Add the chicken mixture, cover, and simmer, stirring often, until heated through, 5 to 7 minutes.
3. Add the basil right before serving, reserving a bit to sprinkle on top for a pretty garnish. Serve over rice.

NOTE ON FRESH BASIL:

I often buy a small basil plant instead of a plastic carton of basil leaves from the produce aisle. It's about the same price, and sometimes I actually get around to planting it. Also, instead of using a knife, I use kitchen scissors to snip the leaves into thin strips.



1. Preheat the oven to 350°F and spray a 9 x 13-inch pan with cooking spray.
2. In a bowl, mix the beef, beans, quinoa, spinach, ½ cup of the enchilada sauce, and ½ cup of the grated cheese.
3. Wrap the tortillas in a damp paper towel and microwave for 30 seconds, until warm and pliable.
4. Spread ½ cup of the enchilada sauce on the bottom of the pan.
5. To make an enchilada, place a scant ¼ cup of the meat mixture onto a tortilla, roll it like a cigar, and place it seam side down in the pan. Repeat to make the rest of the enchiladas. They may tear and not stay in a perfect roll, but it won't matter once you cover them with cheese.
6. Cover the enchiladas with the rest of the enchilada sauce and sprinkle with the remaining 2 cups of cheese.
7. Bake for 20 minutes, until the cheese is melted and the sauce is bubbling.

WEEK 6, DAY 5

ITALIAN SAUSAGE MARINARA OVER PASTA

¼ cup per person
Simple Slow Cooker
Marinara (page 270),
saved forward, or jarred
marinara

Italian sausage links,
sweet or hot

2 to 3 ounces uncooked
pasta per person (I use
rigatoni)

Grated Parmesan, for
serving

I am tempted to apologize for this recipe, which is not a recipe at all but just an assemblage of ingredients. Instead of apologizing, though, I decided to congratulate myself that the save-it-forward method lets you have a healthy home-cooked meal with almost no prep. In keeping with the ease of this meal, I add a Caesar salad kit from the produce aisle and congratulate myself a second time for staying out of the drive-through lane. (Can you tell I like to congratulate myself whenever possible?!)





LUNCH BITS AND BOBS:

Leftover Italian sausage and marinara would make a fantastic sausage sub, topped with provolone and broiled. Or spice up scrambled eggs with sliced Italian sausage (I'd rinse off the excess marinara, but maybe you'd love it!).

1. Place the marinara and Italian sausage in the slow cooker. Cook on high for 4 to 6 hours or low for 6 to 8 hours, until the sausage is cooked through. You can even use frozen sausage and it will be cooked by dinnertime.
2. Cook the pasta according to the package directions and serve with the marinara and sausage, and top with a sprinkle of Parmesan.

WEEK 6, DAY 6

SHEET PAN TILAPIA, BROWNED BUTTER CORN CAKES, AND ROASTED VEGGIES

- 1 pound roastable vegetables of your choice (I like asparagus and broccoli)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Table salt and ground black pepper, to taste
- Cooking spray
- 6 tilapia fillets, thawed
- Your favorite seasoning blend for the tilapia (Cajun, Italian, Greek, Peloponnesian—whatever!)
- Creamy Polenta (page 95), saved forward
- 4 tablespoons (½ stick) butter
- 1 garlic clove, minced



When you've completely forgotten to plan for dinner, tilapia is your BFF (best fish friend). Since I live in the middle of nowhere, the only tilapia I am familiar with is frozen in single-fillet packaging. (Do my urban friends have fish markets with fresh tilapia? I must know the answer to this!) You can pull those babies out of the freezer shortly before dinner, plunk them in the sink and run water over them in their packaging, and they will be ready to cook in minutes. The best practice would be to thaw them in the fridge overnight, but whatever you do, don't cook them from a frozen state.

An exciting twist to this meal is the Browned Butter Corn Cakes. You know the leftover polenta you saved forward on Day 3? It's been waiting for you to cut into cakes and bake (with nutty browned butter!) on a sheet pan with your tilapia. I did a side-by-side taste test of pan-fried corn cakes and sheet pan-baked corn cakes and was surprised at the results. I thought the pan-fried would surely win the taste test, but honestly it was too close to call. Given the ease of making the corn cakes on the same sheet pan instead of dirtying another pan, they're a winner! The secret, I think, is the browned butter—don't skip this three-minute step.

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F. Cover two sheet pans with foil for easy cleanup.
2. Prepare the veggies by cutting them into similar-size pieces so that they will cook at about the same rate. Place on one of the sheet pans and toss with the oil, salt, and pepper, keeping the types of vegetables separated so that if

BAKED BUFFALO CHICKEN DIP

Filling from Buffalo Chicken Taquitos (page 108), saved forward, frozen or thawed

Tortilla chips, crackers, and/or celery and carrot sticks, for serving

Magically, the taquito filling from earlier in the week becomes a bubbly, cheesy, crowd-pleasing party dip—voilà!

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. If your filling is in an ovenproof dish, you can pop it in the oven and bake from frozen, though I would allow it to sit on the counter for a while before placing it in the oven to lessen the risk of a cracked dish. If baking from frozen, it will take about an hour to get hot and bubbly. If thawed overnight in the fridge, it will take around 20 minutes. If you need to, you can give it a jump-start in the microwave.
3. Serve with the tortilla chips, crackers, and/or celery and carrot sticks.

SAUSAGE AND VEGETABLE KEBABS

Kebab skewers, saved forward

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. Heat the foil packet of kebabs in the oven for 15 to 20 minutes, until warmed through.
3. Arrange the mini skewers artistically on a pretty plate and serve!

PIMIENTO CHEESE DEVILED EGGS

10 eggs, hard-boiled, peeled, and halved (see page 18)

½ cup pimiento cheese (see page 110), saved forward

¼ cup mayonnaise

⅛ teaspoon cayenne pepper or a splash of your favorite hot sauce

Paprika, for garnish

Deviled eggs have a devilish way of being instantly devoured when plunked on a buffet table; have you noticed this phenomenon? I probably shouldn't have included the additional enticement of pimiento cheese in this recipe, but I want you to be the hostess with the mostest, so I couldn't resist.

TIMING NOTE: It is best to make these on the day of the party so they don't dry out.

1. Pop the yolks out of the hard-boiled eggs and place them in a bowl. Add the pimiento cheese, mayo, and cayenne and mash with a fork until combined.
2. Place a small mound of the filling into the cavity of each egg white half. I prefer to fill only 16 of the egg halves, not the whole 20, so that the filling is more plentiful—and you won't have to fret if one of the egg whites tears. The extra egg white halves can be a little snack for the chef.
3. Sprinkle a bit of paprika on top to add a little color!

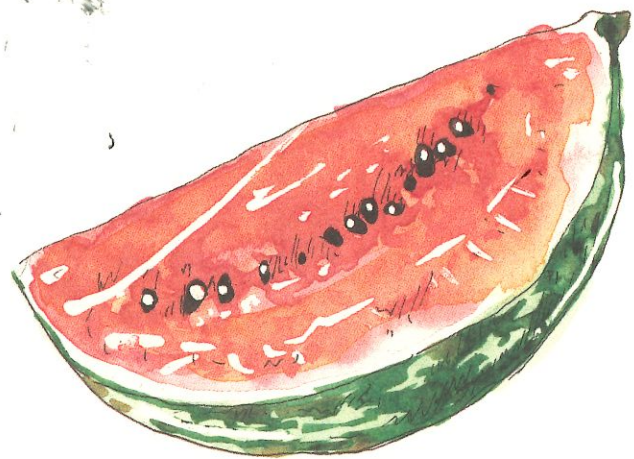
WEEK 8, DAY 3

WATERMELON, FETA, AND ARUGULA SALAD

- 6 cups watermelon chunks
- ½ cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1 cup arugula
- ¼ cup red onion slivers (see page 127), saved forward
- ¼ cup mint leaves, slivered
- ¼ cup fresh basil leaves, slivered
- ¼ cup freshly squeezed orange juice (or prepared orange juice)
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ½ teaspoon table salt, or to taste

You can keep it simple and just serve the Cuban Sliders (page 132) with watermelon slices, but man, oh man, this salad pairs nicely with them.

1. Place the watermelon, feta, arugula, red onion, mint, and basil in a bowl.
2. Combine the orange juice, balsamic vinegar, olive oil, and salt in a jar with a lid and shake until well blended. Drizzle the dressing over the ingredients in the bowl and toss to combine.



WEEK 8, DAY 4

ASIAN FLANK STEAK AND QUINOA SUMMER ROLLS with PEANUTTY DIPPING SAUCE

Asian Flank Steak (page 129), saved forward

QUINOA SUMMER ROLLS

Spring roll rice paper wrappers (see Note on page 136)

Cabbage slaw blend—a scant ¼ cup per roll (see page 130), saved forward

Cooked quinoa—a scant ¼ cup per roll (see page 130), saved forward

Red bell pepper strips

Cilantro leaves

DIPPING SAUCE (MAKE DOUBLE IF YOU'RE BIG DIPPERS!)

½ cup peanut butter

¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons water

3 tablespoons soy sauce (I use low-sodium)

¼ cup white or rice wine vinegar

½ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes (or more, if you like heat)

You likely have most of the elements of tonight's meal in the fridge already so dinner will be ready in no time. If you have never made summer rolls, they are lots of fun—a real participatory event for the eaters! The quantities for the ingredients will depend on how many rolls you will be making. I envisioned this meal as pictured on page 136, with Asian Flank Steak artfully fanned out on the plate next to a few summer rolls, but my daughter tucked her steak into the summer rolls. You choose!

1. Preheat the oven to 300°F.
2. Place the foil-wrapped flank steak in the oven to warm for 20 to 25 minutes while assembling the summer rolls.
3. To assemble the summer rolls, you will need a bowl of very warm water that is big enough to hold a spring roll wrapper. Submerge one wrapper in the warm water at a time, and let it soak for approximately 15 seconds until it becomes pliable. Remove the wrapper from the water and pat it dry with a clean dish towel. Layer a line of slaw, then quinoa, then bell pepper strips, then cilantro down the middle of the wrapper and follow the rolling instructions on the package of wrappers.
4. To make the dipping sauce, combine the peanut butter, water, soy sauce, vinegar, and red pepper flakes in a medium bowl and whisk vigorously until blended.
5. Remove the steak from the oven and place on a cutting board. Slice the flank steak against the grain into ½-inch-thick slices. Serve alongside the summer rolls and small bowls of the dipping sauce.

Lois B.

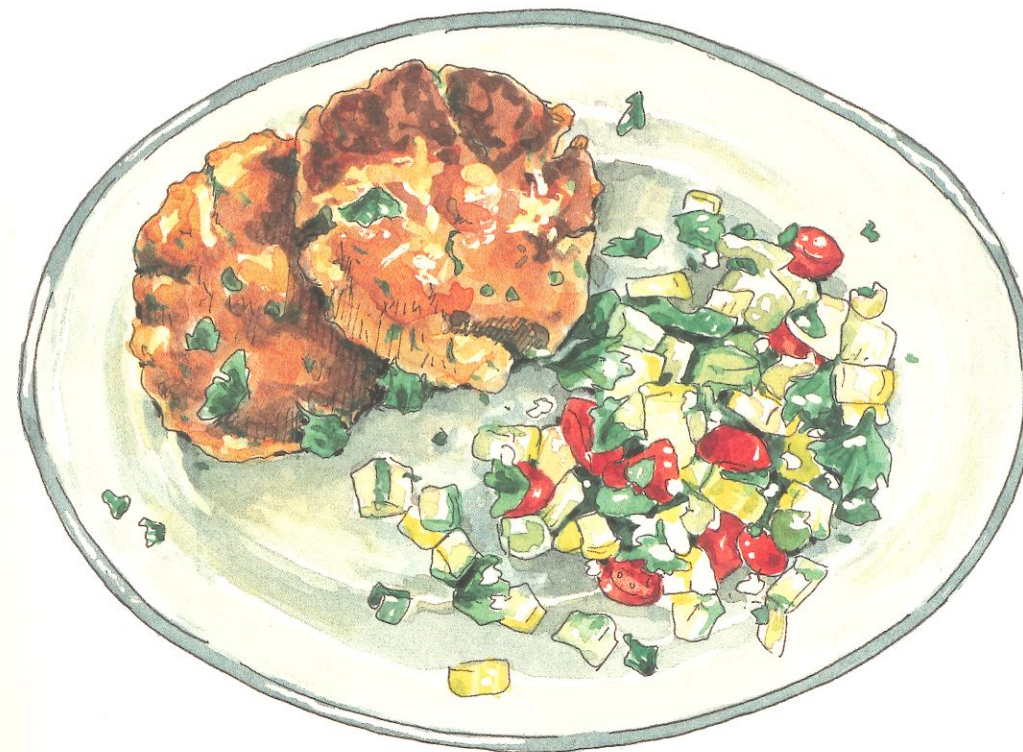
WEEK 10, DAY 1

SALMON PATTIES

- 1 small zucchini, trimmed and unpeeled
- 1 teaspoon table salt
- 1 egg
- 2 tablespoons plain yogurt or sour cream
- ½ cup flour (I use gluten-free)
- ½ cup cornmeal
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon Old Bay seasoning (or your favorite seasoning blend)
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- ¼ cup grated or finely chopped yellow onion
- One 14.75-ounce can salmon, drained
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon butter
- Basil Aioli (page 222), mayonnaise, or sour cream, for serving

I didn't grow up eating salmon patties, but I've become a believer. As a Catholic, I opt for meatless meals on Fridays, but when you live in a small town on the prairie, you have zero options for fresh fish (well, except for maybe fishing in a ranch pond, but this is Pantry Week!). Canned salmon to the rescue! When doctored up, then lightly fried, the patties make a delightful meal, particularly when paired with the flavorful Marinated Artichoke Salad (page 160).

1. Grate the zucchini on the fine side of a box grater, sprinkle it lightly with ½ teaspoon of the salt, and spread it out on a couple of paper towels to let it release its moisture while you're prepping the other ingredients.
2. In a medium bowl, lightly mix together the egg and yogurt, then stir in the flour, cornmeal, baking powder, Old Bay, pepper, and the remaining ½ teaspoon salt. Remove all the moisture you can from the zucchini by pressing another paper towel on top of it, squeezing and squishing. Add the zucchini, garlic, onion, and salmon to the flour mixture and mix gently but thoroughly.
3. Form the mixture into 6 to 7 patties (or make them smaller if you prefer). Don't over-press them or they will be too dense.
4. Heat a large skillet over medium heat, then add the oil and butter and heat until a few drops of water sizzle when flicked into the skillet. Cook the patties for 2 to 3 minutes on each side, until very golden brown.
5. Serve with Basil Aioli, mayonnaise, or sour cream.



LUNCH BITS AND BOBS: *My daughter, Meg, made what she considers to be a revolutionary discovery. She and I were testing recipes, and she made a salmon taco from a leftover salmon patty. She broke a patty into pieces and put it inside a warm tortilla schmearred with Hummus (page 209), then added some leftover roasted veggies. Her mama was delighted by both the taste and her ingenuity.*

WEEK 11, DAY 2

STROMBOLI

Cooking spray

1 refrigerated pizza crust
(I use the kind in a tube in
the biscuit section)

½ cup jarred Alfredo
sauce, plus additional for
serving

Freshly ground black
pepper

1 cup roughly chopped
or shredded rotisserie
chicken (see page 171)

1 cup baby spinach

6 slices deli ham

6 slices Swiss cheese (or
a mild cheese of your
choice)

Italian seasoning
(optional, but pretty and
tasty)



Strombolis and calzones are first cousins, but a stromboli is rolled in a jelly-roll fashion. I know you're perfectly capable of making your own pizza dough, but during Shortcut Week, I'll be calling you an overachiever if you try that kind of pro move. The refrigerated pizza crust works just fine here!

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F.
2. Spray a sheet pan with cooking spray and unroll the pizza dough. Leave it at about the size it starts out; if you stretch it to be thinner, you'll make holes you'll have to fix. (Overachievers, you can even it out to create a perfect rectangle!)
3. Leaving about 1 inch clear at the edges, slather the dough with the Alfredo sauce and grind some black pepper on top for extra oomph. Add a layer of chicken, then the spinach, ham, and cheese. Starting on a long side, roll the dough up like a jelly roll. Lay it seam side down on the sheet pan, press closed each end to seal the roll, and tuck the ends under the roll.
4. Spray the roll lightly with cooking spray, then sprinkle it lightly with Italian seasoning, if using.
5. Bake for 17 to 20 minutes, until golden brown, starting to check at the 15-minute mark. Lift the roll and make sure it is browned on the bottom before removing it from the oven.
6. If possible, let the stromboli rest for 5 to 10 minutes for cleaner slicing. Cut enough stromboli to serve tonight into 1½-inch slices, leaving the rest intact, and serve.

SAVE IT FORWARD: I have a little trick up my sleeve for the stromboli leftovers, so try to save a bit for a side dish later in the week. See page 179 if you can't wait!



WEEK 12, DAY 2

IMPOSSIBLE ZUCCHINI PIE

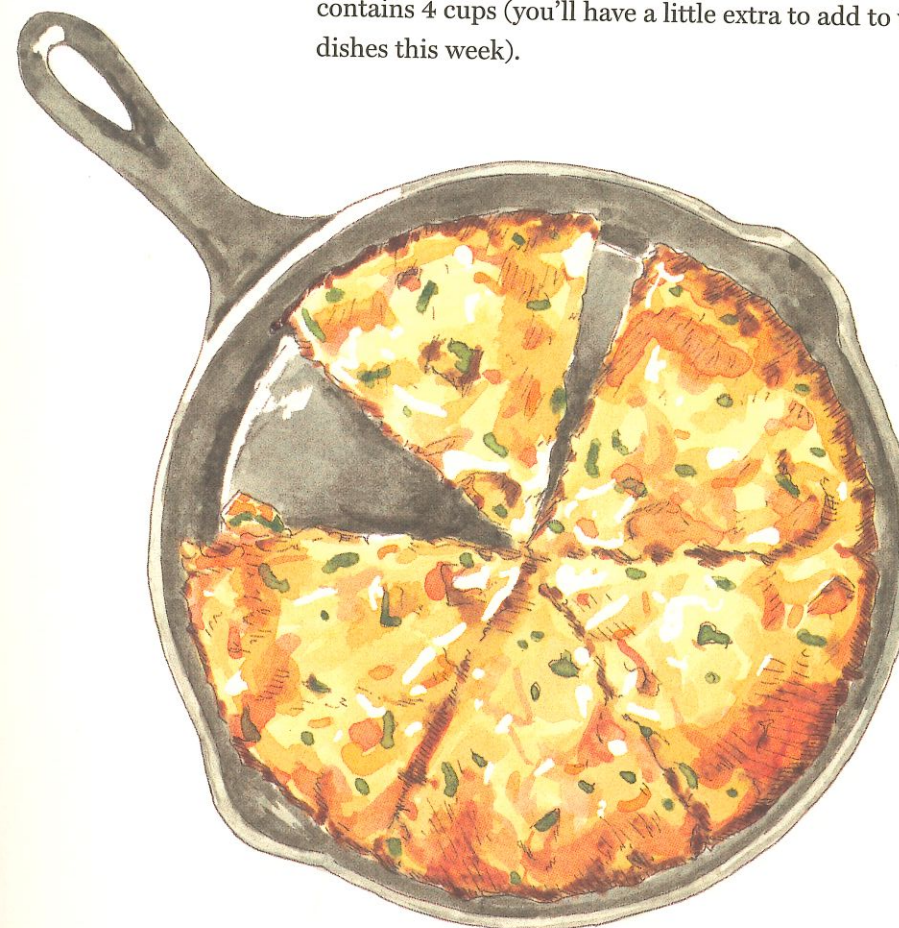
Cooking spray
3 cups shredded zucchini
(a **SAVE-IT-FORWARD**
item)
½ teaspoon table salt
4 large eggs
1 cup baking mix (such as
Bisquick)
½ cup cottage cheese or
sour cream
1 tablespoon olive or
vegetable oil
1½ cups grated cheese
of your choice (I use
1 cup cheddar and ½ cup
Parmesan)
½ teaspoon Italian
seasoning
½ teaspoon garlic powder
½ teaspoon ground black
pepper
1 cup finely chopped
yellow onion
1 cup shredded carrots
(a **SAVE-IT-FORWARD**
item; I buy bagged)

If you didn't grow up in the 1960s and '70s, you might have missed the Impossible Pie trend, when Bisquick was the apple of every homemaker's eye, including my mom's. I want to launch a one-woman movement to #BringBackImpossiblePies! They're honestly really good, and (Bis)QUICK. Healthwise, Impossible Pies are not terribly carb-laden, since you use just one cup of the baking mix in the entire recipe, and there are also gluten-free and heart-healthy versions of Bisquick available nowadays. If you're a purist, you can make your own baking mix, particularly if you have self-rising flour on hand from pizza night, and I bet you could even sub pancake mix. Can you tell I'm giving you no excuses to not try this?! In terms of veggies, this recipe is very flexible: substitute any combination of vegetables you like.

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spray a 12-inch pie pan or a 6 x 10-inch baking dish with cooking spray.
2. Spread the zucchini on paper towels and sprinkle with the salt.
3. In a large bowl, whisk the eggs. Add the baking mix, cottage cheese or sour cream, oil, cheese, Italian seasoning, garlic powder, and pepper. Mix until just combined.
4. Press down on the zucchini with more paper towels to remove as much of the liquid as you can. Add the zucchini, onion, and carrots to the bowl and mix just until combined.
5. Pour the mixture into the greased pan and bake for 40 to 45 minutes, until the pie is golden brown and set in the middle. If you can beat back your hungry eaters, let the pie sit for 10 to 15 minutes to cool and firm up a bit.

SAVE IT FORWARD—ZUCCHINI AND CARROTS: In case you're pulling out the food processor for a shredding extravaganza, here are the total amounts of zucchini and carrots you'll need for the week.

- **ZUCCHINI:** You'll need 5 cups of shredded zucchini, or 3 to 4 medium zucchini.
- **CARROTS:** If you cook everything in this week's menu, you'll need 9½ cups of shredded carrots (hello, beta carotene!). If you're buying the matchstick carrots from the produce aisle, you'll need 3 bags; each 10-ounce bag contains 4 cups (you'll have a little extra to add to various dishes this week).





TO DO TONIGHT:

If you're making homemade Crème Fraîche (page 226) for the Caramelized Onion and Bacon Tart (page 225), start it tonight. It will take just 5 minutes of prep, and you'll feel like a boss.

1. Cut the rolls in half and remove some of the inner bread so that the sandwiches will be less dense. (See Save It Forward—Miscellaneous below.)
2. For each sandwich, brush the inside of one roll half with olive oil. Spread the tapenade on the inside of the other roll half and add a sprinkling of sun-dried tomatoes. Add a couple of ham layers, a layer of cheese, a layer of arugula and basil leaves, a thin layer of the leftover roasted veggies (if using), another layer of cheese, and the pepperoni. Top with the other half of the roll.
3. Wrap each sandwich with plastic wrap, making sure that it is entirely wrapped, even the ends. Set the sandwiches in the refrigerator and top them with something heavy; I use a cast-iron skillet filled with heavy cans. You could also stack cans on a heavy cutting board. Refrigerate the pressed sandwiches for at least 4 hours to overnight (or even longer).
4. Cut into slices to serve. My son will feel vindicated if you choose to heat yours a bit, in either the oven or microwave, but the rest of us like these cold!

SAVE IT FORWARD—MISCELLANEOUS: More olive tapenade, sun-dried tomatoes, and pepperoni will be used later in the week in Mediterranean Pasta Salad (page 223). Save the bread scraps, too. Sauté them in olive oil or butter until they are almost crunchy, then crumble them and use as bread crumbs, if desired.

SAVE IT FORWARD—ARUGULA: Use any extra arugula for a salad to go with the pasta tomorrow night.

WEEK 13, DAY 3

PASTA WITH RICOTTA, PEAS, AND BACON

- 6 bacon slices
- Penne or rotini pasta (see Save It Forward—Pasta on page 216 for quantity; a **SAVE-IT-FORWARD** item)
- Table salt, for the pasta water, plus more to taste
- 6 ounces frozen peas (about 1 cup)
- One 15-ounce carton ricotta
- 2 tablespoons butter, at room temperature
- 4-ounce log of chèvre (goat cheese), crumbled into small chunks (see Note on Substitution on page 216)
- ½ cup freshly grated Parmesan, plus more for serving
- Freshly ground black pepper

This recipe is a riff on a Marcella Hazan recipe, and like most of her recipes, the genius is in its simplicity. Accordingly, a simple salad with saved-forward arugula, lemon juice, and Parmesan is all you need to round out this lovely dish. God rest your soul, Marcella, for introducing Americans (particularly me!) to your beloved Italian cuisine.



Lentils



1. Cook the bacon (see Save It Forward—Bacon on page 217), reserving 4 tablespoons of bacon grease. Roughly chop the bacon and set it aside.
2. Fill a pasta pot with water and plenty of salt—it should taste like the sea!—and bring it to a boil. Cook the pasta according to the al dente package directions, reserve 2 cups of the pasta water (very important!), drain the pasta, and return it to the pot. If you're cooking extra pasta for the pasta salad, set some aside and refrigerate it.
3. In a skillet on medium-low heat, cook the frozen peas with the reserved bacon grease until the peas are thawed. Add the chopped bacon and cook until the peas and bacon are warmed.
4. Whip the ricotta and butter until fluffy. I use a hand mixer and whip it in the serving dish.
5. To assemble, add the drained pasta to the serving dish with the ricotta mixture and the chèvre, and toss until the chèvre is melted and incorporated into the pasta. Add the bacon, peas, and Parmesan to the pasta and stir to combine. Add the reserved pasta water a little at a time—probably at least 1 cup—until the pasta is flavorful and moist. Add salt and freshly ground pepper to taste.
6. Divide the pasta among individual bowls and sprinkle with more freshly grated Parmesan and serve.

NOTE ON SUBSTITUTION: If you are not a fan of chèvre you can substitute a bit of heavy cream or cream cheese, enough to make the dish a bit more creamy.

SAVE IT FORWARD—PASTA: If you're cooking only enough for this dish, allow 2 to 3 ounces of dry pasta per person. If you're serving Mediterranean Pasta Salad (page 223) later in the week, add 12 more ounces to the pot.



TO DO TONIGHT:

If you haven't already made Bacon-Tomato Jam (page 221) for tomorrow night's Shrimp BLTs, you might want to do it tonight, since it needs to cook for 30 to 45 minutes. You could also make the Basil Aioli while it cooks, and tomorrow's dinner will be a breeze!

SAVE IT FORWARD—BACON: The day I learned from a savvy homeschooling friend how to cook bacon in the oven, the heavens parted and I heard angels singing. Give it a try! To make 1 pound of bacon, line 2 sheet pans with extra-wide foil, which will keep the bacon grease from leaking through to the pan. Place the bacon slices side by side on the pans, without overlapping them. Bake at 400°F for 30 minutes or longer, depending on the thickness of the bacon. You'll likely need to rotate the pans to a different rack halfway through the cooking time. Remove the bacon when it is just starting to brown but not yet crispy. Drain on paper towels. For this recipe, scoop out 4 tablespoons of bacon grease before you discard the foil.

There are four possible bacon uses this week: this pasta dish, the BLT on page 218 along with the accompanying Bacon-Tomato Jam (page 221), and the Caramelized Onion and Bacon Tart on page 225. If you plan on making all four dishes, cook at least a pound of bacon, possibly 1½ pounds (which will require another sheet pan or a second round of cooking).



CRÈME FRAÎCHE

1 cup heavy whipping cream
3 tablespoons buttermilk

Crème fraîche is a thick, tangy, delightful cream, akin to sour cream but less tart. It will last about two weeks in the fridge, so if you're cooking Week 14, the Veggie-Forward, Fall-Winter Edition menu (page 229) next, you'll devour it with a couple of dishes that week. You may want to double the recipe!

1. Place the cream and buttermilk in a small container and stir. Cover with a cheesecloth or thin cotton tea towel and secure with a rubber band.
2. Let the container sit out in a warm place in the house for 24 hours, or even a bit longer is fine.
3. Remove the cheesecloth, stir, and marvel at how the mixture has thickened. To thicken even further, place the container in the refrigerator for another 24 hours and stir again.

SLOW COOKER CARAMELIZED ONIONS

5 yellow onions, cut lengthwise into ¼-inch-thick slices
5 tablespoons butter, melted
1 teaspoon table salt



Have you ever made caramelized onions on the stove? Though delicious, they are a major hassle, with forty-five minutes of near-constant stirring, plus your house smells like a diner for a week. I wish I knew the genius who came up with this slow cooker method so I could send her a patty melt as an expression of my love. When I make this recipe, I often double it, because you'll also use the onions in a couple recipes in Week 14, the Veggie-Forward Fall-Winter Edition menu (page 229), if you're cooking that next.

This slow cooker version is virtually hands-off, though it does take twelve hours of cooking. Warning: I would put the slow cooker in your garage or somewhere outside the house. Caramelized onions kick up quite an aroma, but at least you can move the slow cooker outside your living area.

1. Place the onions in the crock of a slow cooker, then drizzle with the butter and salt and toss to combine. Cook on low for 12 hours. If at some point you can stir the onions, do so, but no need to set the alarm for two a.m. if you're cooking them overnight.
2. The onions will last in the refrigerator for 10 days, but I usually just package them in 1-cup servings and freeze for later use.