

Lunch recipes

For many of my clients lunch appears to be the most difficult meal of the day. I think this is because what can be bought is not necessarily healthy, and unless you have prepared something in advance the options may be limited.

Even if you are home for the day, having lunch prepared can be key to making a good food choice, eating at the correct time, and preventing the blood sugar dip, which might result in poor food selection.

I love food, but I am pretty repetitive in the foods I take for lunch when I am at work. On a day-to-day basis my salad jar is still my 'go to' lunch. Having the salad leaves at the top of the jar means that when emptied onto a plate they are still fresh and crispy, and it smells fresh and delicious.

Preparing your lunch in advance ensures you have high value, good quality food, and it is ready for you when you are, saving time queuing at the local sandwich shop.

Salad Jars

This is most favourite and most frequent lunch, especially for work. It can be made 1-2 days in advance and picked out of the fridge on the way to work. Choose a large jam or pickle jar as a storage vessel, ensure the top seals well if you are putting dressing at the base.

1) Dressing – choose from

- 2 tbsp. of olive oil mixed with 1 tbsp. balsamic vinegar
- 1 tbsp. of avocado oil mixed with 2 tbsp. lemon juice and ½ crushed garlic clove.
- 1 tbsp. olive oil mixed with 2 tbsp. lemon juice and pinch salt.
- 2 tbsp. olive oil mixed with 1 tbsp. apple cider vinegar and 1 tsp. mustard.

Put at the base of the salad jar or alternatively carry in a separate container and add to the salad before serving.

2) Filling vegetables – choose one, or a combination

- 100g roasted sweet potato
- 100g avocado
- 100g roasted cauliflower
- 100g chopped grated beetroot.

Place in the jar on top of the dressing

3) Raw vegetables - use a combination, or just your favourites.

- 150g grated carrot
- 150g chopped cherry tomatoes
- ½ red or yellow pepper
- 6-8 slices cucumber

Add this as the next layer into the salad jar

4) Protein – pick one from

- 150g cooked quinoa
- 150g poached chicken breast
- 150g smoked mackerel
- 1 boiled eggs, sliced.

Add to the jar as the 4th layer

5) Salad leaves

- 2-3 handfuls rocket
- 2-3 handfuls watercress
- 2-3 handfuls mixed salad leaves

Add to the top of the jar, this will keep the leaves fresh.

Optional Topping – pick from one.

- 1 tbsp. sunflower seeds
- 1 tbsp. chia seeds
- 1tsp chilli flakes
- 1tsp almond flakes

Tips

- you can vary the ingredients as much as possible, but protein and vegetables should form the main ingredient.
- Olives are a good addition.



Carrot and Almond Soup

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 6 carrots, chopped
- 1 sweet potato, peeled and chopped
- 1 stick celery, sliced
- 1 onion or leek, sliced
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- Small bunch coriander, chopped
- Sea salt
- Freshly ground black pepper.
- 1-1.5L vegetable or chicken stock (or bone broth)
- 100g ground almonds

Preparation

1. Place all vegetables into a large pan and cover with stock
2. Add coriander and garlic and season with salt and pepper
3. Simmer until vegetables are tender.
4. Blend together until smooth
5. Check seasoning.
6. Add ground almonds and stir through the soup.
7. Serve in warmed bowls.

Quick Tomato Soup

My daughter used to love Heinz tomato soup. I continue to make homemade, but this is a pretty close match.

Serves 4
Prep time 15mins
Cooking time 25mins

Ingredients

- 1 small onion
- 1 stick celery
- 25g butter
- 1 carrot, sliced
- 1 sweet potato, sliced
- 400g chopped tomatoes
- 1 tbsp. tomato puree
- 1 red pepper, chopped
- 750mls vegetable stock
- ½-1 tsp sea salt and freshly ground black pepper.
- 3 tablespoons ground almonds (optional)

Method

1. Gently heat butter in a pan and add the onion and celery. Cook over a low heat for 5-10 minutes.
2. Add remaining ingredients, except for the ground almonds
3. Cook for 20-30 minutes, until all vegetables are soft.
4. Blend until smooth
5. Add ground almonds if using, or eat with extra protein source on the side e.g. boiled egg.

Moroccan Soup

Serves 4
Prep time 2 minutes
Cook time 5 minutes

Ingredients

- 2 x 400g chopped tomatoes
- 400g tinned chickpeas
- 150mls water
- 1 vegetable stock cube
- 1 handful fresh mint or 2 teaspoons dried mint
- 1 tbsp tomato puree
- 1 teaspoon Harrissa paste (choose good quality, organic, with minimal additives)
- Sea salt and pepper
- 500mls tub of natural yoghurt to serve

Method

1. Put all the ingredients, except the yoghurt, into a saucepan.
2. Boil for 5 minutes on the hob over medium to high heat
3. Season with sea salt and pepper.
4. Add fresh mint

To serve

- Serve in warmed soup bowls with lightly toasted pitta bread (if tolerated)
- Drizzle with natural yoghurt

Turkey Burgers

Serves 4
Prep 10minutes
Cook 25minutes

Ingredients

- 500g turkey mince
- 3cm fresh ginger, peeled and grated
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 1 red chilli
- 25g fresh coriander, finely chopped
- 25g fresh mint, finely chopped
- 2 spring onions, finely chopped
- 2tbsp coconut oil

To serve

- Large lettuce leaves to serve
- 2 spring onions to serve

Cucumber yoghurt dressing

- 200mg organic natural Greek yoghurt
- ½ cucumber grated
- Zest of half lemon

Sweet potato wedges

- 800g sweet potatoes or 1 per person, chopped into wedges
- 1-2 tbsp coconut oil

Method

1. Preheat oven to 200°C/108°C fan/ Gas 6
2. Mix all the burger ingredients together, except the oil
3. Add salt and pepper (may need about ½ tsp salt)
4. Mix well with hands and then shape into 4 patties
5. Set aside
6. Heat coconut oil in a baking tray, place sweet potatoes, season and toss in oil
7. Cook for 20 mins
8. Add 2 tbsp coconut oil to non stick pan and heat on medium heat
9. Fry burgers for 5 minutes on each side, until golden
10. Remove and add to oven pan with wedges to cook for 5 mins more
11. Make yoghurt dressing by mixing all the ingredients together
12. Place a burger on 1-2 lettuce leaves; add a dollop of yoghurt and sprinkle with spring onions.
13. Add a side of potato wedges and large green salad or mixed green vegetables.

Fajitas

Serves 4

Prep time - 15 mins

Cooking time - 15 mins

Ingredients

- 2 red, yellow or orange peppers
- 1 large onion, 4 leeks or a bundle of spring onions
- 1 handful of other seasonal veg e.g. chard or spring greens, courgette or fried squash.
- 1tsp. coconut oil
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Juice of 1 lemon or 2 limes
- 1 tsp. cumin seeds
- 1 tsp. paprika
- A pinch of chilli powder
- A handful of fresh summer herbs (coriander, chives, chevil, parsley).
- Tortilla wraps (can use gluten free or could use Romaine lettuce leaves instead).
- Grated cheddar and/or natural Greek organic yoghurt to serve.
- Salsa or diced tomatoes to serve.
- Optional left over cooked meat, chicken or prawns.

Preparation

1. Slice peppers and remove stems and seeds
2. Heat a large frying pan so it is hot, gloss the veg with melted oil
3. Season with salt and pepper and add a spritz of citrus juice
4. And sizzle the veg in a hot pan for a few minutes
5. Stir often
6. When the veg has a little colour add the spices and more coconut oil if required.
7. Add any cooked meat if using now
8. Add fresh squeeze of citrus juice
9. Taste add more spices, and season as required
10. Scatter herbs over
11. Bundle into warm tortilla wraps
12. Serve with salsa, fresh dice tomatoes, dollop of natural yoghurt and/or a scattering of cheese.

Tips

- Fajitas are versatile use any vegetables that you find in the fridge.
- Good with left over chick, pork or steak.
- Nice as a vegetable side dish.
- Pop leftovers, or extra portions into a salad jar and eat cold the next day