

Seasonal Bites: Winter Edition



*Family-friendly
recipes from our
kitchen to yours.*



Affinity Education Group

Welcome!

Welcome to Seasonal Bites: Winter Edition, a seasonal recipe collection from Affinity Education.

At Affinity Education, we know that mealtimes are more than just moments to eat – they’re opportunities to connect, learn, and grow together. That’s why we’ve created this winter recipe collection, filled with simple, nutritious meals that children love and families can feel good about.

All recipes in this book come from Feed Australia, a trusted program we use to plan balanced meals across our childcare centres. These are the same meals your child may enjoy during their day with us, so if you spot a familiar dish on the menu, now you can recreate it at home! Feed Australia helps ensure every recipe meets national nutrition guidelines, supporting children’s health and development from the earliest years.

These recipes are designed with busy families in mind – easy to prepare, full of flavour, and perfect for little helpers to get involved. Whether you’re whipping up a yummy snack or trying something new for dinner, each dish is a chance to build healthy habits and happy memories.

We hope this book brings warmth to your kitchen and joy to your table this winter, and inspires many more delicious moments with your little ones.

Warmly,
Michele Mayhew
Affinity Education

Contents

Snacks

- 4 Upside down pineapple banana bread
- 6 Cheese and spinach quesadillas
- 8 Vegan zucchini brownies
- 10 Apple flaxseed slice
- 12 Baked bean savoury muffins
- 14 Apricot oat coconut slice
- 16 Choc chip oat bars
- 18 Hawaiian pizza scrolls
- 20 Banana blueberry pudding
- 22 Lemon zucchini fritters

Mains

- 24 Chilli con carne with brown rice
- 26 Creamy spinach, tuna and parmesan spaghetti
- 28 Potato, leek and chicken soup
- 30 Chicken chow mein noodles
- 32 Vegetable dahl
- 34 Beef black bean noodles
- 36 Vegetarian lasagna
- 38 Chicken cacciatore with penne pasta
- 40 Baked fish with fried rice and broccoli
- 42 Lamb korma with vegetables and brown rice



This is delicious warm or cold, and perfect for lunchboxes the next day!

Upside Down Pineapple Banana Bread

Serves:
4–6 adults

Prep time:
10 minutes

Bake time:
30–40 minutes

Allergy info:
Contains gluten

Storage Tip:
Keeps in an airtight container for 2–3 days. Freezes well in slices.

Lunchbox Friendly:
Yes

Ingredients

1 large banana (approx. 135g), peeled	2 tsp water
3 pineapple slices (from canned pineapple in juice), plus juice reserved	2 tsp brown sugar (loosely packed)
2/3 cup wholemeal self-raising flour	2 1/2 tbsp raw sugar
	1/2 tsp vanilla extract
	3 tbsp olive oil (pure)

Method

1. Preheat your oven to 170°C (fan-forced). Line a small slice tray or loaf tin with baking paper.
2. Slice 3 pineapple rings into thin strips (1–2mm) and lay them on the bottom of the tray.
3. Simmer half the juice from the can with the brown sugar in a small saucepan for 5 minutes, or until it thickens slightly. Pour this syrup over the pineapple slices.
4. Mash the banana in a large bowl. Dice the remaining pineapple and add it to the bowl, along with the leftover juice.
5. Add the flour, raw sugar, vanilla, oil, and water. Mix gently until just combined – don't overmix.
6. Pour the batter over the pineapple in the tray and smooth the top.
7. Bake for 30–40 minutes, or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean.
8. Cool in the tray for 10 minutes, then turn out onto a plate so the pineapple is on top. Slice and serve.

Optional Flavour Boosts

- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon or mixed spice for a warm, spiced twist
- Zest of 1/2 an orange for a citrusy lift
- A handful of chopped walnuts or pecans for crunch (if nut-safe)
- A sprinkle of shredded coconut on top before baking

Little Kitchen Helpers

Winter is the perfect time to bake something warm and comforting together. Let you little one help mash the banana or arrange the pineapple slices. It's a fun hands-on job for small fingers.

Cheese and Spinach Quesadillas

Serves:
4–6 adults

Prep time:
10 minutes

Cook time:
10–15 minutes

Allergy info:
Contains dairy, gluten

Storage Tip:
Best eaten fresh.
Can be stored in the fridge for 1 day and reheated.

Lunchbox Friendly:
Yes, if kept cool.

Ingredients

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 tsp garlic, minced | 115g cheddar cheese, grated (about 1 cup) |
| 125g frozen chopped spinach (about 1/2 a packet) | 5 multigrain tortilla wraps |
| 140g canned baked beans in tomato sauce (about 1/3 of a can) | A pinch of ground cumin |

Method

1. Thaw the spinach and squeeze out any excess water.
2. In a bowl, mix the spinach, baked beans, garlic, cumin, and grated cheese until well combined.
3. Lay out the tortilla wraps. Spread the mixture evenly over half of each wrap, then fold over to form a half-moon shape.
4. Heat a non-stick frying pan over medium heat. Cook each quesadilla for 2–3 minutes per side, or until golden and the cheese is melted.
5. Slice into wedges and serve warm.

Optional Flavour Boosts

- Chopped spring onion or fresh coriander
- A dash of mild chilli sauce or smoked paprika
- Swap cheddar for feta for a tangy twist
- Add corn kernels or grated zucchini for extra veg

Little Kitchen Helpers

Let your child help sprinkle the cheese, fold the wraps, or even press down gently with a spatula (with supervision). These simple steps help build confidence and coordination in the kitchen.



These are great with a side of yoghurt or avocado for dipping.



These brownies are soft, rich, and naturally sweetened – perfect for lunchboxes or afternoon tea!

Vegan Zucchini Brownies

Serves:
4–6 adults

Prep time:
15 minutes

Bake time:
30–40 minutes

Allergy info:
Contains gluten
nut-free and
dairy-free

Storage Tip:
Store in the fridge
for up to 4 days.
Freezes well.

**Lunchbox
Friendly:**
Yes

Ingredients

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1/2 large zucchini (approx. 230g), grated and squeezed | 1/4 cup raw sugar |
| 1 small banana (approx. 110g), peeled | 1/4 cup cocoa powder |
| 3/4 cup self-raising flour | 1 tbsp desiccated or grated coconut |
| 2 tbsp sunflower seeds | 1/2 tsp vanilla extract |
| 1/2 cup water | 2 tbsp olive oil |

Method

1. Preheat your oven to 180°C (fan-forced). Line a small slice tray or square baking tin with baking paper.
2. Grate the zucchini and squeeze out as much moisture as possible using a clean tea towel or paper towel.
3. In a large bowl, mash the banana, then add all remaining ingredients, including the zucchini. Mix until just combined.
4. Pour the batter into the prepared tray and smooth the top.
5. Bake for 30–40 minutes, or until the top is firm and a skewer inserted into the centre comes out mostly clean.
6. Cool in the tray before slicing into squares.

Optional Flavour Boosts

- 1/2 tsp cinnamon or nutmeg for warmth
- A handful of dark choc chips (dairy-free if needed)
- Swap sunflower seeds for pepitas or omit entirely
- Add 1 tbsp maple syrup for extra sweetness

Seasonal Spotlight

Zucchini is in season during winter in many parts of Australia, making this a great time to sneak extra veggies into sweet treats. Grating and squeezing the zucchini helps it blend right in – your kids won't even notice it's there!

Apple Flaxseed Slice

Serves:
4–6 adults

Prep time:
15 minutes

Cook time:
30–35 minutes

Allergy info:
Contains
gluten

Storage Tip:
Keeps in the fridge
for 3–4 days.
Freezes well.

**Lunchbox
Friendly:**
Yes

Ingredients

1 medium green apple (approx. 140g), peeled and grated	1/3 cup water
3/4 cup wholemeal self-raising flour	2 1/2 tbsp brown sugar (loosely packed)
1 tbsp flaxseed (or linseed)	1/4 tsp ground cinnamon
	2 1/2 tbsp olive oil

Method

1. Preheat your oven to 180°C (fan-forced). Line a small slice tray or square baking tin with baking paper.
2. Peel and grate the apple. If it's very juicy, gently squeeze out some of the excess moisture.
3. In a large bowl, combine the grated apple, flour, flaxseed, brown sugar, cinnamon, oil, and water. Mix until just combined.
4. Pour the mixture into the prepared tray and smooth the top.
5. Bake for 30–35 minutes, or until golden and firm to the touch.
6. Cool in the tray before slicing into squares.

Optional Flavour Boosts

- 1/2 tsp vanilla extract for a hint of sweetness
- A handful of sultanas or chopped dates
- A sprinkle of oats or seeds on top before baking
- Swap cinnamon for mixed spice for a warmer flavour

Seasonal Spotlight

Apples are in peak season during winter in Australia, making them a perfect base for baking. Grating them into slices adds natural sweetness and moisture – no need for eggs or dairy!

Try using different apple varieties like Granny Smith or Pink Lady for subtle flavour changes.



This slice is soft, lightly sweet, and perfect for morning tea or lunchboxes.



Baked Bean Savoury Muffins

Serves:
4–6 adults
(6–8 muffins)

Prep time:
15 minutes

Bake time:
20–25 minutes

Allergy info:
Contains gluten,
dairy

Storage Tip:
Store in the fridge
for 3 days or freeze
for up to 2 months.

**Lunchbox
Friendly:**
Yes

Ingredients

1/6 medium green
capsicum (about 25g),
finely diced

1/3 cup grated
cheddar cheese

1/2 cup milk

1/6 medium red
capsicum (about 25g),
finely diced

3/4 cup self-raising
flour

1 spring onion, finely
sliced

1/2 tbsp flaxseed
(or linseed)

210g canned baked
beans in tomato sauce
(about 1/2 a can)

1/3 tsp reduced-salt
vegetable stock powder

2 tsp olive oil

Method

1. Preheat your oven to 180°C (fan-forced). Lightly grease or line a muffin tray.
2. Dice the capsicum and slice the spring onion.
3. In a large bowl, combine all ingredients and mix until just combined. The batter will be thick.
4. Spoon the mixture evenly into muffin cups, filling each about 3/4 full.
5. Bake for 20–25 minutes, or until golden and a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean.
6. Cool slightly before serving. These are great warm or cold!

Optional Flavour Boosts

- A pinch of smoked paprika or mild curry powder
- Chopped parsley or chives for freshness
- Swap cheddar for feta for a tangy twist
- Add corn kernels or grated carrot for extra veg

Lunchbox Love

These muffins are a great way to sneak in veggies and fibre. They hold up well in lunchboxes and can be made ahead and frozen – just pop one in the lunchbox in the morning and it'll be ready by snack time!

Try pairing with veggie sticks or a boiled egg for a balanced lunch.

Apricot Oat Coconut Slice

Serves:
4–6 adults

Prep time:
15 minutes

Cook time:
20–25 minutes

Allergy info:
Contains seeds;
gluten-free if
using GF oats

Storage Tip:
Store in an airtight
container for 5
days. Freezes well.

**Lunchbox
Friendly:**
Yes

Ingredients

85g dried apricots (about 1/2 cup, chopped)	1 tsp water
1/2 cup rolled oats	1 tbsp pure maple syrup
1/2 tsp chia seeds	2 1/2 tbsp desiccated or grated coconut
2 tsp pumpkin seeds (pepitas)	2 tsp olive oil

Method

1. Preheat your oven to 165°C (fan-forced). Line a small slice tray or loaf tin with baking paper.
2. Roughly chop the apricots.
3. In a food processor, blend the oats, apricots, chia seeds, pumpkin seeds, and coconut until crumbly.
4. Add the maple syrup, water, and oil. Pulse until the mixture comes together – it should be sticky but not wet.
5. Press the mixture firmly into the prepared tray.
6. Bake for 20–25 minutes, or until the edges are just starting to brown. Don't overbake – it will become crumbly.
7. Cool completely in the tray before slicing into bars or squares.

Optional Flavour Boosts

- Add a pinch of cinnamon or vanilla extract
- Swap apricots for dates or sultanas
- Add a few dark choc chips for a treat
- Top with extra coconut before baking for a golden finish

Smart Food Facts

Dried apricots are a great source of fibre, iron, and natural sweetness – no need for refined sugar. Chia seeds add healthy fats and help bind the slice together.

This is a great snack for kids and adults alike. No blender? Just chop finely and mix by hand!





These bars are soft, chewy, and naturally sweetened – perfect for lunchboxes or after-school snacks.

Choc Chip Oat Bars

Serves:
4–6 adults

Prep time:
20 minutes
(Includes chia soak time)

Bake time:
25–30 minutes

Allergy info:
Contains gluten, dairy
(If using margarine with dairy)

Storage Tip:
Store in the fridge for 4–5 days.
Freezes well.

Lunchbox Friendly:
Yes

Ingredients

1 small banana (approx. 110g), peeled	1/4 cup brown sugar (loosely packed)
2/3 cup rolled oats	15–20g cooking chocolate, chopped or as chips (about 1 tbsp)
2/3 cup wholemeal self-raising flour	1/8 tsp baking powder
2 tsp chia seeds	1/4 tsp vanilla extract
2 1/2 tbsp water	2 tbsp margarine (or butter)

Method

1. Preheat your oven to 180°C (fan-forced). Line a small slice tray or loaf tin with baking paper.
2. Combine chia seeds and water in a small bowl. Let sit for 15 minutes to form a gel.
3. Place half the oats in a food processor and blend until finely ground.
4. In a large bowl, beat together the margarine, brown sugar, and mashed banana until smooth.
5. Add the chia gel, ground oats, remaining oats, flour, baking powder, and vanilla. Mix until just combined.
6. Stir in the chocolate chips or chopped chocolate.
7. Press the mixture into the prepared tray and smooth the top.
8. Bake for 25–30 minutes, or until golden and firm to the touch.
9. Cool completely in the tray before slicing into bars.

Optional Flavour Boosts

- Add 1/2 tsp cinnamon or nutmeg for warmth
- Swap chocolate for sultanas or chopped dates
- Add a spoonful of peanut butter (if nut-safe)
- Top with a sprinkle of oats or coconut before baking

Little Kitchen Helpers

Let your child help mash the banana, stir in the chocolate chips, or press the mixture into the tray. These simple steps are fun and build confidence in the kitchen.

Kids love seeing their own handiwork turn into a tasty treat!

Hawaiian Pizza Scrolls

Serves:
4–6 adults
(Approx 8–10 scrolls)

Prep time:
20 minutes

Cook time:
20–25 minutes

Allergy info:
Contains gluten,
dairy, pork

Storage Tip:
Store in an airtight
container for 2–3
days. Freezes well.

Ingredients

- | | |
|---|---|
| 165g natural yoghurt
(about 2/3 cup) | 115g grated cheese
(cheddar/mozzarella/
parmesan mix) |
| 165g wholemeal self-
raising flour (about 1 cup) | 65g leg ham, chopped |
| 2 tbsp tomato paste | 40g frozen chopped
spinach (thawed and
squeezed) |
| 70g canned baked beans
in tomato sauce (about 1/6
of a can) | 1/2 tsp dried oregano |
| 130g canned pineapple,
drained and chopped
(about 1/3 cup) | |

Method

1. Preheat your oven to 180°C (fan-forced). Line a baking tray with baking paper.
2. Make the dough: In a bowl, mix the yoghurt and flour until a soft dough forms. Knead briefly on a floured surface until smooth.
3. Roll out the dough into a rectangle about 1cm thick.
4. Spread the tomato paste evenly over the dough. Top with spinach, baked beans, pineapple, ham, cheese, and a sprinkle of oregano.
5. Roll up the dough tightly from the long edge to form a log. Slice into 2–3cm thick rounds.
6. Place scrolls flat-side down on the tray. Bake for 20–25 minutes, or until golden and cooked through.
7. Cool slightly before serving.

Optional Flavour Boosts

- Add chopped capsicum or mushrooms for extra veg
- Swap ham for shredded chicken or go meat-free
- Use pesto instead of tomato paste for a twist
- Sprinkle sesame or poppy seeds on top before baking

Little Kitchen Helpers

Kids love helping with scrolls! Let them spread the sauce, sprinkle the toppings, or even roll the dough. It's a fun, hands-on way to get them involved in making their own lunch.

Cooking together helps build independence and healthy food habits.



These scrolls are great warm or cold – perfect for lunchboxes or weekend lunches!

Banana Blueberry Pudding

Serves:
4–6 adults

Prep time:
20 minutes

Bake time:
30 minutes

Allergy info:
Contains gluten,
eggs

Storage Tip:
Best served warm.
Store leftovers in
the fridge for 2
days.

Ingredients

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 small banana
(approx. 85g), sliced | 1 large egg, beaten |
| 1/3 cup frozen blueberries | 115mL orange juice
(about 1/2 cup) |
| 1/2 cup self-raising flour | 2 tbsp white sugar |
| 1/2 cup wholemeal
self-raising flour | 2 tbsp vegetable oil
(e.g. canola or sunflower) |

Method

1. Preheat your oven to 180°C (fan-forced). Lightly grease a small baking dish or loaf tin.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together the oil, sugar, and orange juice. Add the beaten egg and mix well.
3. Fold in both flours until just combined.
4. Gently stir through the sliced banana and blueberries.
5. Pour the mixture into the prepared dish and smooth the top.
6. Bake for 30 minutes, or until golden and a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean.
7. Serve warm, ideally with a spoonful of custard or yoghurt.

Optional Flavour Boosts

- Add 1/2 tsp cinnamon or vanilla extract
- Swap blueberries for raspberries or chopped apple
- Top with a sprinkle of oats or coconut before baking
- Add a handful of chopped walnuts (if nut-safe)

Little Kitchen Helpers

This warm pudding is a winter favourite! Let your child help slice the banana (with a butter knife), stir the batter, or sprinkle in the blueberries. It's a great way to get them involved in making dessert.

Serve with warm custard or a dollop of yoghurt for a nourishing winter treat.





These fritters are light, zesty, and perfect for breakfast, lunch, or snacks.

Lemon Zucchini Fritters

Serves:
4–6 adults
(makes approx. 10–12 small fritters)

Prep time:
15 minutes

Cook time:
15–20 minutes

Allergy info:
Contains gluten, eggs, dairy

Storage Tip:
Store in the fridge for 2–3 days. Reheat in a pan or oven.

Lunchbox Friendly:
Yes

Ingredients

2 medium zucchinis (approx. 460g), grated and squeezed	1 egg
3/4 cup milk	2 tsp lemon juice (freshly squeezed)
1/4 cup natural yoghurt	1 tsp maple syrup
1 cup wholemeal self-raising flour	1/2 tsp lemon zest
	1/2 tsp vanilla extract
	1 tbsp olive oil (plus extra for frying)

Method

1. In a large bowl, whisk together the egg, yoghurt, milk, oil, vanilla, lemon juice, maple syrup, and lemon zest.
2. Grate the zucchini and squeeze out excess moisture using a clean tea towel or paper towel. Add to the wet mixture.
3. Gradually stir in the flour until just combined – don't overmix. Heat a non-stick frying pan over medium heat and add a small amount of olive oil.
4. Heat a non-stick frying pan over medium heat and add a small amount of olive oil.
5. Scoop tablespoon-sized portions of batter into the pan. Cook for 2–3 minutes, or until bubbles appear on the surface.
6. Flip and cook for another 2–3 minutes, or until golden brown and cooked through.
7. Serve warm with a dollop of yoghurt or a squeeze of lemon.

Optional Flavour Boosts

- Add chopped fresh herbs like parsley or dill
- Sprinkle in a little grated parmesan for a savoury kick
- Swap lemon zest for orange zest for a sweeter twist
- Serve with tzatziki or hummus for dipping

Seasonal Spotlight

Zucchini is a winter hero – affordable, versatile, and packed with moisture. These fritters are a great way to use up extra zucchini and introduce new flavours to little ones.

The lemon adds a fresh twist that brightens up winter meals.

Chilli Con Carne with Brown Rice

Serves:
4–6 adults

Prep time:
20 minutes

Bake time:
40 minutes

Allergy info:
Dairy (cheese);
gluten-free if using
GF stock and spices

Storage Tip:
Store in the fridge
for up to 3 days.
Freezes well in
portions.

**Lunchbox
Friendly:** Yes, in
a thermos or
reheated

Ingredients

For the chilli:

250g beef mince
Pinch of chilli powder
(adjust to taste)
1/2 tsp ground cumin
1/4 tsp smoked paprika
Salt and pepper, to taste
Olive oil, for cooking

1 small brown onion,
finely chopped
1 stalk celery, finely
chopped
1 small zucchini, grated or
finely chopped
1 small carrot, grated
1 tsp dried oregano
1/2 cup frozen corn kernels
200g canned diced
tomatoes (about 1/2 a can)
2 tbsp tomato paste
1 can red kidney beans
(400g), drained
(blend half if preferred)

For serving:

3/4 cup uncooked
brown rice
1/2 cup grated cheddar
cheese (optional)

Method

1. Cook the rice according to packet instructions. Set aside.
2. Heat a drizzle of olive oil in a large pan over medium heat. Add the onion and beef mince. Cook until the mince is browned and no longer pink.
3. Add the celery, zucchini, and carrot. Cook for 5 minutes until softened.
4. Stir in the tomato paste, canned tomatoes, oregano, cumin, paprika, and chilli powder. Mix well.
5. Add the kidney beans and corn. Simmer for 15–20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Season to taste.
6. Serve the chilli over brown rice, topped with grated cheese if using.

Optional Flavour Boosts

- Add chopped capsicum or mushrooms with the veggies
- Use beef stock or a splash of Worcestershire sauce for richness
- Top with avocado, sour cream, or fresh coriander
- Swap beef for lentils or plant-based mince for a vegetarian version

Little Kitchen Helpers

This is a great recipe to cook together on a chilly evening. Let your child help rinse the beans, stir the pot, or sprinkle cheese on top. It's a great way to get them excited about veggies!

Mild spices make this family-friendly, but you can always adjust the heat to suit your crew.





A creamy, comforting pasta dish packed with veggies and protein, perfect for winter dinners.

Creamy Spinach & Parmesan Tuna Spaghetti

Serves:
4–6 adults

Prep time:
20 minutes

Cook time:
25–30 minutes

Allergy info:
Contains gluten, dairy, fish

Storage Tip:
Store in the fridge for 2 days. Not suitable for freezing due to dairy content

Lunchbox Friendly:
Yes, reheated

Ingredients

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1/2 small brown onion, finely chopped | 1/4 cup cream |
| 1 clove garlic, minced | 1/4 cup grated parmesan cheese |
| 1 tbsp chopped parsley (fresh or dried) | 125g wholemeal spaghetti or fettuccine |
| 1 cup frozen mixed vegetables | 1 tbsp plain flour |
| 1/2 cup frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed | 1 tbsp butter |
| 1/2 can chickpeas (200g), drained (optional: blend half for creaminess) | 1/2 can tuna in brine (about 200g), drained |
| 1 1/2 cups milk | 2 tbsp canned creamed chicken soup (optional) |

Method

1. Cook the pasta according to packet instructions. Drain and set aside.
2. Make the white sauce: In a saucepan, melt the butter over medium heat. Stir in the flour and cook for 1 minute. Gradually whisk in the milk and simmer until thickened. (Optional: blend in half the chickpeas for extra creaminess.)
3. In a separate pan, sauté the onion and garlic until soft.
4. Add the sautéed onion and garlic to the white sauce. Stir in the parmesan, spinach, mixed vegetables, parsley, remaining chickpeas, tuna, cream, and creamed soup (if using). Simmer for 5–10 minutes.
5. Combine the sauce with the cooked pasta and stir gently to coat.
6. Serve warm, topped with extra parmesan if desired.

Optional Flavour Boosts

- Add a pinch of nutmeg or black pepper to the sauce
- Use lemon zest or juice for a fresh twist
- Swap tuna for shredded chicken or go meat-free with extra chickpeas
- Top with breadcrumbs and bake for a pasta bake version

Little Kitchen Helpers

Let your child help add the pasta, sprinkle the cheese, or stir the sauce (with supervision). These simple tasks help build confidence and make mealtime more fun.

Pasta is always a hit, and this version sneaks in plenty of goodness!

Potato, Leek & Chicken Soup

Serves:
4–6 adults

Prep time:
20 minutes

Cook time:
40 minutes

Allergy info:
Contains dairy

Storage Tip:
Store in the fridge for 3 days. Freezes well.

Lunchbox Friendly:
Yes, in a thermos

Ingredients

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1/2 small cauliflower (about 300g), chopped | 1/2 can chickpeas (200g), drained |
| 1 tbsp chopped parsley | 1 1/2 cups milk |
| 1 clove garlic, minced | 2 tbsp grated parmesan cheese |
| 1 small leek, sliced | 200g chicken thigh, sliced |
| 1 cup frozen mixed vegetables | 1/4 cup cream |
| 2 medium potatoes, diced (skin on) | 1 cup vegetable stock |
| Pinch of dried thyme | Olive oil, for sautéing |

Method

1. Preheat oven to 180°C. Place sliced chicken on a lined tray and bake for 15–20 minutes or until cooked through. Set aside.
2. In a large pot, heat a drizzle of olive oil. Sauté the leek and garlic until soft and fragrant.
3. Add the diced potato, cauliflower, chickpeas, thyme, stock, and milk. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 20–25 minutes, or until the potatoes are soft.
4. Stir in the cream and parmesan. Use a stick blender to blend the soup until smooth and creamy.
5. Add the frozen vegetables, parsley, and cooked chicken. Simmer for another 5 minutes until heated through.
6. Serve warm, with crusty bread if desired.

Optional Flavour Boosts

- Add a pinch of nutmeg or black pepper to the soup
- Top with crispy bacon bits or croutons
- Swap chicken for shredded roast chicken or tofu
- Stir in baby spinach at the end for extra greens

Little Kitchen Help

Let your child help wash the potatoes, sprinkle in the cheese, or stir the pot (with supervision). Smooth soups are a great way to introduce new veggies in a familiar, comforting way.

This one's a winter hug in a bowl, and a great way to use up fridge staples.



A creamy, comforting soup packed with veggies and protein – perfect for chilly winter nights.



A colourful, veggie-packed noodle dish that's quick, tasty, and family-friendly.

Chicken Chow Mein Noodles

Serves:
4–6 adults

Prep time:
20 minutes

Cook time:
20–25 minutes

Allergy info:
Contains gluten, soy

Storage Tip:
Store in the fridge for 2–3 days. Not suitable for freezing.

Lunchbox Friendly:
Yes, reheated

Ingredients

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1/2 cup canned bamboo shoots, drained | 1 tbsp cornflour |
| 1 cup bean sprouts | 150g instant wheat noodles (uncooked, no flavour sachet) |
| 1 cup chopped choy sum or bok choy | 250g chicken mince |
| 1/4 small brown onion, thinly sliced | 1 cup water |
| 1/2 medium carrot, julienned | 2 tbsp oyster sauce |
| 1/2 red capsicum, julienned | 1 tsp brown sugar |
| 1 spring onion, sliced | 1 tbsp reduced-salt soy sauce |
| 1 cup shredded wombok (Chinese cabbage) | 1 tsp olive oil |
| 1/4 can lentils (about 100g), drained | |

Method

1. Prepare the sauce: In a small saucepan, whisk together water, soy sauce, cornflour, brown sugar, and oyster sauce. Heat gently until thickened. Set aside.
2. Cook the noodles in boiling water for 2–3 minutes until just softened. Drain and set aside.
3. Heat oil in a large wok or frying pan. Add the chicken mince and cook until browned.
4. Add the onion, garlic (if using), and all vegetables. Stir-fry for 3–4 minutes until just tender.
5. Add the lentils and cooked noodles. Pour over the sauce and toss everything together until well coated and heated through.
6. Serve hot, garnished with spring onion.

Optional Flavour Boosts

- Add a dash of sesame oil or grated ginger to the sauce
- Top with crushed peanuts or sesame seeds (if nut-safe)
- Use tofu instead of chicken for a vegetarian version

Little Kitchen Helpers

Let your child help break up the noodles, wash the veggies, or stir the sauce. Stir-fry dishes are a great way to introduce new vegetables in a familiar format.

Noodles are always a hit, and this version is packed with hidden goodness!

Vegetable Dahl with Rice & Pappadums

Serves:
4–6 adults

Prep time:
20 minutes

Cook time:
40–45 minutes

Allergy info:
Gluten-free,
dairy-free,
vegan

Storage Tip:
Store in the fridge
for 3–4 days.
Freezes well

**Lunchbox
Friendly:**
Yes, in
a thermos

Ingredients

For the Dahl:	1/2 cup water
1/2 small brown onion, finely chopped	2 tbsp canned coconut milk
1 small clove garlic, minced	1/2 tsp curry powder
1/2 tsp fresh ginger, grated	1/4 tsp ground cumin
1/4 small cauliflower, chopped	Pinch of garam masala
1/2 small carrot, diced	1/4 tsp ground turmeric
1/2 small potato, diced (skin on)	1 tsp olive oil
1/4 small sweet potato, diced	
1 small tomato, chopped	For serving:
1/2 cup dried green or brown lentils	1/2 cup uncooked brown rice
1 1/2 cups vegetable stock	2–3 pappadums (optional)

Method

1. Cook the rice according to packet instructions. Set aside.
2. Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Sauté the onion, garlic, and ginger until soft and fragrant.
3. Add all chopped vegetables, lentils, stock, water, coconut milk, and spices. Stir to combine.
4. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer uncovered for 30–40 minutes, or until the lentils and vegetables are soft and the mixture has thickened. Stir occasionally and add a splash of water if needed.
5. Cook pappadums according to packet instructions (microwave or pan-fry).
6. Serve the dahl with brown rice and pappadums on the side.

Optional Flavour Boosts

- Add a squeeze of lemon juice before serving for brightness
- Top with fresh coriander or yoghurt (if not dairy-free)
- Stir in baby spinach at the end for extra greens
- Serve with naan or roti instead of rice for a change

A Family Favourite

Let your child help rinse the lentils, stir the pot, or count out the pappadums. Dahl is a great way to introduce gentle spices and new textures in a comforting, familiar way.

Mild, creamy, and packed with veggies – this is a winter winner for the whole family.



A hearty, warming dish full of fibre, flavour, and colour – perfect for winter nights.



A quick, flavourful noodle stir-fry packed with colourful veggies and tender beef.

Beef Black Bean Noodles

Serves: 4–6 adults

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 25–30 minutes

Allergy info: Contains gluten, soy

Storage Tip: Store in the fridge for 2–3 days. Not suitable for freezing.

Lunchbox Friendly: Yes, reheated

Ingredients

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1/2 cup canned bamboo shoots, drained | 200g soft wheat noodles (e.g. Hokkien or Singapore noodles) |
| 1 cup frozen broccoli florets | 1 tsp cornflour |
| 1/4 small brown onion, sliced | 300g beef (e.g. chuck steak or stir-fry strips), thinly sliced |
| 1 small stalk celery, sliced | 1/2 cup water |
| 1/2 tsp fresh ginger, grated | 3 tbsp black bean sauce |
| 1/2 small zucchini, julienned | 1 tsp light soy sauce |
| 1/2 medium carrot, julienned | 1 tsp olive oil |
| 1/4 red capsicum, sliced | |
| 1/2 cup snow peas | |

Method

1. Cook the noodles according to packet instructions. Drain and set aside.
2. Heat oil in a large wok or frying pan. Sauté the beef, onion, and ginger over medium-high heat until the beef is browned.
3. In a small bowl, mix cornflour, water, soy sauce, and black bean sauce. Add to the beef and simmer for 10–15 minutes, or until the beef is tender and the sauce thickens.
4. Add all the sliced vegetables to the pan. Stir-fry for 5–7 minutes until just tender but still crisp.
5. Toss in the cooked noodles and stir to combine. Heat through and serve hot.

Optional Flavour Boosts

- Add a dash of sesame oil or chilli flakes for extra flavour
- Top with fresh coriander or spring onion
- Swap beef for chicken, tofu, or mushrooms
- Add a squeeze of lime juice before serving for brightness

Little Kitchen Helpers

Let your child help rinse the veggies, mix the sauce, or toss the noodles (with supervision). Stir-fries are a great way to introduce new textures and flavours in a fun, familiar format. Noodles are always a hit, and this version is full of hidden veggies!

Vegetarian Lasagne

Serves:
4–6 adults

Prep time:
30 minutes

Cook time:
45–50 minutes
Allergy info:
Contains dairy,
gluten

Storage Tip:
Store in the
fridge for 3–4
days. Freezes
well in portions.

**Lunchbox
Friendly:**
Yes, reheated

Ingredients

Veggie Sauce

1 medium brown onion, diced
1 celery stalk, finely chopped
1/2 medium eggplant, diced
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 medium zucchinis, grated
2 medium carrots, grated
200 g mushrooms, chopped
1 tsp dried oregano
1 jar (700 g) passata
1 medium red capsicum, diced
150 g frozen chopped spinach
1 can (400 g) diced tomatoes
1 tbsp tomato paste

1 can (425 g) baked beans
in tomato sauce
1 can (400 g) lentils,
drained and rinsed
1 tsp brown sugar
1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
(or vegetarian alternative)
1 tbsp olive oil

White Sauce

500 mL regular milk
50 g parmesan cheese,
finely grated
1 tbsp cornflour
Salt and pepper to taste

Assembly

250–300 g wholemeal
lasagne sheets (dry)
150–200 g grated cheese mix
(cheddar, mozzarella,
parmesan)
1 jar passata (for topping)
1 tsp chia seeds (optional)

Method

1. Heat olive oil in a large pan over medium heat. Add onion, celery, eggplant, garlic, zucchini, carrot, mushrooms, and capsicum. Cook for 10–12 minutes until softened.

2. Stir in passata, diced tomatoes, tomato paste, oregano, spinach, baked beans, lentils, brown sugar, and Worcestershire sauce. Simmer for 15–20 minutes until thickened. Season to taste.

3. In a separate saucepan, whisk cornflour into a small amount of cold milk to form a slurry. Add the remaining milk and heat gently, stirring until thickened. Stir in parmesan and season with salt and pepper.

4. In a baking dish, layer the veggie sauce, lasagne sheets, and white sauce. Repeat the layers, finishing with a layer of lasagne sheets.

5. Spread the remaining passata on top, sprinkle with grated cheese mix, and optionally scatter chia seeds.

6. Cover with foil and bake at 180°C (350°F) for 30 minutes. Remove the foil and bake for another 10–15 minutes until golden and bubbling. Let rest for 5–10 minutes before serving.



Kids can help layer the lasagne, sprinkle cheese, or stir the white sauce (with supervision). It's a great way to get them excited about veggies!



Chicken Cacciatore Penne

Serves:
4–6 adults

Prep time:
25 minutes

Cook time:
40–45 minutes

Allergy info:
Contains gluten

Storage Tip:
Store in the fridge for 3 days. Freezes well.

Lunchbox Friendly:
Yes, reheated

Ingredients

1 medium brown onion, diced	1 can (400 g) diced tomatoes, no added salt
2 tbsp chopped fresh parsley (plus extra for garnish)	2 medium fresh tomatoes, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced	1 can (400 g) chickpeas, drained and rinsed
1/3 cup green or black olives, drained (optional, see tip)	300 g wholemeal penne pasta
2 medium carrots, diced	500 g chicken thigh fillets, trimmed and diced
200 g mushrooms, sliced	1 tbsp olive oil
1 tsp dried oregano	Salt and pepper to taste
1 small red capsicum, diced	
1/2 tsp dried thyme	

Method

1. Cook the noodles according to packet. Cook the pasta according to packet instructions. Drain and set aside.
2. Heat olive oil in a large pan over medium heat. Add onion, garlic, and carrot. Cook for 5–7 minutes until softened.
3. Add chicken and cook for 6–8 minutes until browned on all sides.
4. Stir in mushrooms, capsicum, oregano, thyme, and fresh tomatoes. Cook for another 5 minutes until vegetables begin to soften.
5. Add canned tomatoes and chickpeas. Simmer for 15–20 minutes until the sauce thickens and the chicken is cooked through. Season with salt and pepper.
6. Stir in cooked pasta and parsley. Toss to combine and heat through.
7. Serve hot, topped with extra parsley. Offer olives on the side for those who enjoy them.

Optional Flavour Boosts

- Add a splash of balsamic vinegar or lemon juice for brightness
- Sprinkle with grated parmesan or nutritional yeast
- Use roasted capsicum for a deeper flavour
- Add a pinch of chili flakes for a mild kick
- Add a splash of sweet chilli sauce for a mild kick

Little Kitchen Helpers

Kids can help rinse the chickpeas, tear parsley leaves, or stir the pasta into the sauce. Let them sprinkle their own olives if they like the flavour!

Baked Fish with Veg Fried Rice & Broccoli

Serves:
4–6 adults

Prep time:
25 minutes

Cook time:
30–35 minutes

Allergy info:
Contains egg, soy,
fish, gluten
(from soy sauce)

Storage Tip:
Store in the fridge
for 2 days. Not
suitable for
freezing once
assembled.

**Lunchbox
Friendly:**
Yes, reheated

Ingredients

300 g frozen broccoli florets	600–700 g basa fish fillets
1/4 head cauliflower, finely diced	3 large eggs
500 g frozen mixed vegetables (peas & corn)	1 tbsp kecap manis (sweet soy sauce)
2 spring onions, finely sliced	1 tbsp soy sauce
1/4 head wombok cabbage, finely shredded	1 stock cube, crumbled
400 g brown rice (uncooked)	1 tbsp olive oil
	Salt and pepper to taste

Method

1. Cook the rice and diced cauliflower in boiling water until tender. Drain, rinse under cold water, and set aside.
2. Preheat oven to 180°C (350°F). Line a baking tray with baking paper. Place fish fillets on the tray, drizzle with kecap manis, and bake for 15–20 minutes or until cooked through.
3. In a small bowl, beat the eggs with olive oil. Heat a non-stick pan and cook the mixture in batches to form thin omelettes. Let cool slightly, then slice into small strips.
4. Bring a pot of water to a boil and cook the frozen broccoli for 3–4 minutes until just tender. Drain and set aside.
5. In a large pan or wok, combine the cooked rice and cauliflower with shredded wombok, frozen mixed vegetables, spring onion, soy sauce, crumbled stock cube, and egg strips. Stir-fry over medium heat until heated through and well combined.
6. Serve the baked fish alongside the vegetable fried rice and steamed broccoli.

Optional Flavour Boosts

- Add a splash of sesame oil or a sprinkle of sesame seeds to the rice
- Use garlic or ginger in the stir-fry for extra depth
- Top with fresh coriander or a squeeze of lime juice
- Swap basa for salmon or tofu for variety

Little Kitchen Helpers

Kids can help crack and whisk the eggs, mix the rice, or arrange the fish on the tray. Let them choose their favourite veggies to stir into the rice!





Lamb Korma with Brown Rice and Vegetables

Serves:
4–6 adults

Prep time:
30 minutes

Cook time:
60–75 minutes

Allergy info:
Contains dairy,
coconut

Storage Tip:
Store in the fridge for
3 days. Freezes well.

**Lunchbox
Friendly:**
Yes, in a thermos
or reheated

Ingredients

1 medium brown onion,
chopped
2 cloves garlic, peeled
1 thumb-sized piece of
fresh ginger, peeled
1 tbsp buckwheat groats
(optional)
1 medium carrot, diced
1 medium potato, diced
(skin on)
1/2 medium sweet potato,
diced
1 cup frozen mixed
vegetables

2 tbsp tomato paste
1 can (400 g) chickpeas,
drained
1/2 can (200 g) lentils,
drained
150 g natural yoghurt
400 g diced lamb, trimmed
of fat
1/2 cup water
1 tbsp brown sugar
150 mL cream
300 mL canned coconut milk
1 tsp ground cardamom
1/2 tsp ground cinnamon

1 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp garam masala
1 tbsp desiccated coconut
1/2 tsp paprika
1 tsp turmeric
1 tbsp olive oil
1 cup brown rice
(uncooked)
Salt and pepper to taste

Method

1. In a blender or food processor, combine onion, garlic, ginger, and buckwheat groats (if using) to form a paste.
2. Heat oil in a large pan over medium heat. Add the paste and cook for 5–7 minutes until fragrant.
3. Stir in all the spices, tomato paste, water, yoghurt, cream, and coconut milk. Mix well and bring to a gentle simmer.
4. Add the diced lamb to the sauce and marinate for at least 15 minutes (or longer if time allows).
5. Meanwhile, cook brown rice according to packet instructions. Add frozen mixed vegetables in the last 5 minutes of cooking. Drain and set aside.
6. Dice the carrot, potato, and sweet potato into small cubes. Add them to the lamb mixture along with chickpeas and lentils. Stir to combine.
7. Transfer the mixture to a large baking dish. Cover with foil and bake at 180°C (350°F) for 60–75 minutes, or until the lamb is tender and the vegetables are cooked through.
8. Serve hot with the brown rice and vegetable mix. Garnish with extra yoghurt or fresh coriander if desired.

Little Kitchen Helpers

Kids can help measure out spices, stir the rice, or spoon the korma into bowls. Let them taste the sauce and suggest if it needs a little more sweetness or spice!



Affinity Education
Group