

Cooking with Siobhán



A series of healthy cooking on a budget demonstration

Week 1: Learn to Love Lentils

Your daily food decisions have a huge impact on your overall health and performance.

So next time you're doing your shopping, why not make a few decisions to cook something healthy, nutritious and most importantly delicious.

In the next few pages there are some easy, budget friendly recipes to help you on your way.

This week recipes will be made using lentils, chickpeas and black beans.

Beans, lentils and peas also known as **pulses**, are a great source of **protein** (so they are excellent for anyone not eating a lot of meat or fish). Everybody needs protein as protein is what heals us anytime we exert ourselves.

Pulses are very high in fibre which keeps you feeling fuller for longer. Fibre also makes your poop softer which speeds up elimination from your body.

The best thing about pulses is how cheap they are. Whether you buy dried or canned varieties, you're going to get a lot of bang (☺) for your buck!

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Spiced Chickpea Soup

Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp. oil
- 1 onion
- 2 celery stalks
- 3 tsps. ground cumin
- 1 tin chopped tomatoes
- ½ tsp. sugar
- 1 tin chickpeas, drained & rinsed
- 1 pint veg or chicken stock (1 stock cube dissolved in 1 pint boiling water)
- Juice of half lemon
- Small bunch fresh coriander (optional, but delicious)

Method:

1. Heat the oil in a large saucepan.
2. Chop the onion and celery and add to the pot with a little salt and pepper.
3. Fry on a medium heat for about 10 mins. Keeping the lid on will help prevent it from drying out, but you will also need to stir it.
4. Add the cumin and cook for another minute, stirring all the time.
5. Add the tomatoes, the sugar, the chickpeas and the stock.
6. Bring to a boil, and then simmer for 5 to 10 mins.
7. Add the lemon juice and chopped coriander if using.

Serve up and compliment yourself profusely.



Sweet Potato, Red Lentil and Coconut Curry

Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp. oil
- 1 onion
- 5 garlic cloves (crushed)
- 1 tbsp. ginger (grated)
- ½ tsp. chilli powder
- 2 tsp. ground coriander
- 2 tsp. ground cumin
- 2 tsp. ground turmeric
- 2 medium sweet potatoes
- 150g red lentils, rinsed
- 1 tin coconut milk
- 500ml water
- 150 g spinach (optional)
- Juice half lemon or whole lime
- 2 cups brown rice
- Natural yogurt to serve (optional)



Method:

1. Heat the oil in a large pot and fry the onion and garlic for a few minutes
2. Add the ginger and spices and fry for 5 minutes more, taking care they do not stick
3. Peel and chop the sweet potato into bite size pieces.
4. Add to the pot with the lentils, coconut milk and water. Bring to the boil. Reduce heat and let simmer for about 20 mins (stirring often).
5. Add the spinach (if using), lime or lemon juice. Mix through. Top with chopped fresh coriander (if you have it).
6. Season to taste and serve with some brown rice and a spoonful of natural/Greek yogurt.

Voila your dinner is ready!



Black Bean Tacos with Spicy Onions

Make your own spicy onions for these delicious and easy tacos. Give it a try; they're so easy and worth it. It will keep in a jar for weeks in the fridge and can be added to so many things like a burger, a toasted sandwich or a salad.



For the Spicy Onions

- 1 lime
- 1 onion (red onions have a nice sweetness, but you can use whatever you have)
- 1 chilli (red or green)
- Large pinch of salt
- Small pinch of sugar

Method:

- 1 Peel and slice the onion as thinly as you possibly can.
- 2 Remove the seeds from the chilli and discard (slice it thinly also)
- 3 Add the onion and chilli to a clean jar.
- 4 Squeeze in the lime juice, add the salt & sugar. Stir around and that's it.



For the Black Beans

- 1 tbsp. oil
- 1 onion (chopped)
- 1 pepper sliced (any colour)
- 1 garlic clove (crushed)
- 1 small chilli (sliced & seeds removed)
- 1 tomato or 1 tbsp. tomato puree
- ½ tsp. chilli powder
- ½ tsp. dried oregano
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- 1 can black beans (drained & rinsed)
- Salt

To serve: tortillas (optional: avocado, fresh coriander & natural yogurt)

Method:

1. Heat the oil in a pan. Add the onion and sliced pepper. Fry gently for 8- 10 mins.
2. Add the garlic and sliced chilli. Fry for another minute.
3. Add the tomato, chilli powder, oregano, cumin.
4. Stir around and let the flavours mingle. Add a little extra oil if it is drying out.
5. Add the beans and a good pinch of salt. Stir and fry gently for about 10 mins more.
6. Taste and see if it needs a little more salt, oregano or cumin

To Assemble:

1. Heat the tortillas.
2. Place a spoon or 2 of black beans along the middle.
3. Top with some of your spicy onions, a teaspoon or 2 of yogurt, chopped fresh coriander & sliced avocado.
4. Pour over a little zesty juice from your onion jar.

Prepare to make a mess that will be so worth it....

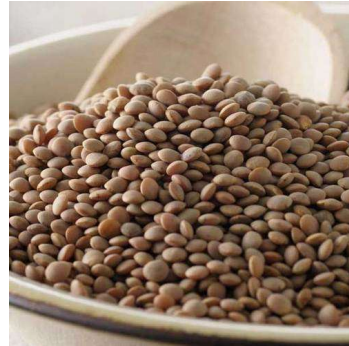
Tip: You can easily double the black bean recipe. It will keep in the fridge for a few days.

Just reheat to serve

Hearty Lentil Stew

Ingredients:

- 4 tbsp. oil
- 1 onion (chopped)
- 2 stalks celery
- 4 cloves garlic (crushed)
- 400 g brown lentils (rinse in a sieve to remove starch)
- 2 large potatoes, roosters are best (peel & chop into chunks)
- 1 large sweet potato (peel & chop into chunks)
- 2 large carrots (peel & chop)
- 400 g chopped tomatoes
- 2 pints vegetable stock (2 stock cubes)
- 1-pint water
- 1 tsp. cumin
- ½ tsp. cinnamon
- Salt & pepper to taste



Method:

1. Heat oil in large pot (one you have a lid for). Fry onions and celery gently for a few minutes. Add the garlic for an extra minute.
2. Add all remaining ingredients. Mix around and cover.
3. It will take about 25mins, stirring a few times. It is cooked when the potatoes and lentils are cooked. You may need to add some extra water near the end as lentils absorb loads.
4. Add some salt and pepper to your own taste.

Fill yourself a hearty bowl and put an end to the cold outside



Lentil, Beetroot & Feta Salad

Ingredients:

- 200 g brown or green lentils
- 2/3 cooked beetroots
- 2 salad tomatoes
- ½ red onion
- Feta cheese (crumbled)
- Fresh herbs, coriander, basil or mint



What to do:

1. Rinse the lentils through a sieve to remove the starch.
2. Place in a pot with 2½ cups water, bring to the boil and simmer for about 20 mins.
3. When they are done, drain through a sieve. Run cold water over them straight away to stop them cooking further. Leave to cool.
4. In a large salad bowl place, the beetroot, tomato & onion. Add the cooled lentils and mix everything together.

To make a salad dressing:

- 3 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tbsp. vinegar (white wine, balsamic or cider vinegar)
- 1 clove garlic (crushed)
- Salt and pepper



Place all ingredients in a jar with a lid and shake.

(💬 The dressing will keep in the fridge for a week)

When plating up!

1. Drizzle a little of the dressing over the salad.
2. Add the chopped herbs if using and the crumbled feta on top.

Week 2:

Transform Your Leftovers

(And use up your canned foods)

Let's reduce our food waste...

We're all responsible for the food we throw out and often that food could be put to good use.

While reducing our food waste helps our planet, more importantly it helps us save money, and who's not on for that?

It's easy and fun to come up with some ideas to use up what you have in your fridge, freezer or cupboards.

There are some staples which will always come in handy while transforming your leftovers, helping to elevate your efforts and impress yourself every time you turn out another culinary triumph.

Here's a list of items to add to your shopping here and there that will serve you well when trying to make a meal out of what seems like nothing.

- Canned beans – chickpeas, black beans, mixed beans
- Canned fish – mackerel, tuna, salmon, sardines
- Canned tomatoes
- Stock cubes
- Soy sauce
- Mayonnaise
- Spices – cumin, coriander, chili powder, turmeric, cinnamon
- Fresh food – ginger, garlic, lemons, limes, fresh herbs
- Frozen peas

You don't need to buy them all at once. One or two extra cans a week will come in very handy some evening when you feel all you have left is a bag of rice.

The following recipes are all easy and quick to prepare, all healthy and nutritious and all budget friendly.

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Peanut Butter Flapjacks



What to do with leftover mashed potato???

Salmon Cakes with Garlic & Lemon Mayo

Ingredients:

Salmon cakes:

- 2 X 180 g tins of salmon (or tuna)
- 600 g leftover mashed potatoes
- 50 g frozen peas
- ½ onion or 2 scallions (chopped)
- 1 lemon (zest only)
- 1 tbsp. plain flour (extra for dusting)
- 1 egg (beaten in a cup)
- Salt & pepper
- Oil for frying.

For the Garlic & Lemon Mayo:

- 4 tbsp. Mayonnaise
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 lemon, juice
- Salt & Pepper



What to do:

1. Put the peas in a pot or microwave and cook for 2 minutes. Remove and run under cold water.
2. Place the mashed potato in a large bowl.
3. Add the peas & onions & mix through the mash.
4. Drain the cans of fish over a sink and empty into the bowl. Break up with a fork.
5. Add the lemon zest, salt and pepper.
6. Add the flour and the beaten egg. Combine everything.
7. Bring it together to form a large ball in the bowl and tip out onto a floured surface.
8. Divide mix into 8 even portions and shape into discs suitable for frying. (Make sure they are not too thick so the inside will heat up nicely).
9. Heat a pan with the oil.
10. Fry each fish cake for 3 to 4 minutes on each side or until crisp and golden. Take care when turning them.

For the Garlic & Lemon Mayo:

1. Place all ingredients in a small bowl, mix and taste.
2. Add more garlic, lemon juice or salt and pepper to your own taste.



Shepherd-less Pie

(For this Pie, use the recipe above for the Hearty Lentil Stew)

Using any vegetarian stew recipe you like, you can make a Shepherd-less Pie with leftover mash. Just make sure the consistency whatever stew you are using is not too runny so you will avoid a watery veg and mashed spud mess!

If you think it is too liquid, bring your stew to the boil and let it simmer for as long as it takes for the liquid to boil off. Maybe add a can of any drained beans to increase the volume.

What to do:

1. Prepare your Hearty Lentil Stew as stated above
2. Heat your oven to 180°C
3. Transfer your stew to a suitably sized ovenproof dish, leaving enough room on top to add a layer of mashed potato.
4. Add the potato using a dessertspoon to gently place it across the top of the stew.
5. Spread it out with a fork forming tracks on top with the prongs. This helps to add crunch to the top.
6. You could add a little grated cheddar if you like.
7. Place in the heated oven for about 30 mins or until golden.



Pitta Chips with Hummus

A great way to use up pitta breads or wraps is to use them to make chips for dipping. They can be used when stale. Check for any moldy bits and cut them off. It's best to store them in the fridge; it keeps the mold at bay for longer.

Steps:

1. Heat the oven to 200°C.
2. Pour some olive oil into a small bowl; add a teaspoon of cumin and mix.
3. Lay out your wraps or pitas on a board. Brush on a little oil & spice mix to each wrap or pita on both sides.
4. Cut the breads into triangle shapes.
5. Lay them out on a baking tray in a single layer.
6. Place in the oven; 5 mins for wraps or 7 to 8 mins for pittas.
7. Sprinkle with salt when done.
8. Allow to cool.

(If not using straight away they will keep in an airtight container for about a week). I don't think they will last that long!



Hummus

Ingredients:

- 1 can chickpeas (drained and rinsed)
- 2 tbsp. tahini
- 2 cloves garlic (crushed)
- ½ lemon (juice only)
- ½ tsp cumin
- ¼ tsp cayenne pepper
- A dash of olive oil
- Salt & pepper
- Water for consistency

Method:

- Place the chickpeas in a food processor.
- Then add all other ingredients on top (NOT the water).
- Turn on food processor slowly (FYI... DON'T FORGET THE LID!)
- Let everything blend and then pour in cold water to get the consistency you like.
- Taste (BEST PART)
- Feel free to add more lemon juice, garlic, spices or salt and pepper to get it exactly how you like it.
- Serve with some carrots, celery or peppers you rescued from the fridge.


TIP: Will keep in an airtight container in the fridge for a week (good joke!) If you don't have a blender, you can make hummus with a potato masher and a fork.



Mexican Bean Soup

"A warming soup where you can add any vegetables or canned beans you have"

Ingredients:

- 1 onion (chopped)
 - 3 cloves garlic (crushed)
 - ½ tsp. chili powder
 - ½ tsp. cumin
 - ½ tsp. dried oregano
 - 2 medium carrots or sweet potatoes (or any vegetables you want to use up)
 - 1 stick celery
 - 1 red pepper
 - ½ vegetable stock cube in 300ml boiling water
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- 1 can black beans (or any canned beans you have, rinsed & drained)
 - 1 can chopped tomatoes
 - Oil for frying
 - Salt & pepper for seasoning

Method:

1. Heat oil in a large pot and fry onion and garlic for a few minutes.
2. Add the spices and oregano and fry for a few more minutes.
3. Add all of the vegetables, the tomatoes and the stock.
4. Bring to the boil with lid on and simmer for 10 minutes or until the carrots are cooked.
5. Add the beans and allow to heat through.
6. Season to taste.



Fish Finger Tacos with Spicy Onions

An easy and delicious recipe to fancy up a childhood favourite while also using up what you have in the freezer.

This recipe is for 2 people (time to impress friends and family)

Ingredients:

- 4 fish fingers (fried or grilled, whichever way you like)
- 1 tbsp. oil
- 1 onion (chopped)
- 1 pepper (sliced)
- 1 garlic clove (crushed)
- 1 small chilli (seeds removed & sliced)
- 1 tomato, or 1 tbsp. tomato puree
- ½ tsp chilli powder
- ½ tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- Salt



To serve: tortillas, avocado, fresh coriander & natural yogurt

Method:

1. Heat the oil in a pan. Add the onion and sliced pepper. Fry gently for about 10 mins.
2. Add the garlic and sliced chilli and fry for 1 minute more.
3. Add the tomato, chilli powder, oregano, cumin.
4. Stir around and let the flavours mingle (add a little extra oil if it seems dry)
5. Fry for about 5 minutes.

For the Spicy Onions

(Great for using up an onion & will keep for weeks in the fridge)

- 1 lime
- 1 onion (red onions have a nice sweetness but you can use whatever you have)
- 1 chilli, medium size (red or green)
- Large pinch of salt
- Small pinch of sugar

What to do:

1. Peel and slice the onion as thinly as you possibly can.
2. Remove the seeds from the chilli and discard. Slice it as thin as you possibly can too.
3. Add the onion and chilli to a clean jar.
4. Squeeze in the lime juice. Add the salt and sugar.
5. Stir around and that's it.

You have your very own condiment ready to go. It's too easy not to!

To Assemble:

Heat the tortillas. Place a spoon of fried peppers along the middle.

Place a fish finger on top.

Top with some of your spicy onions, a teaspoon or 2 of yogurt, chopped fresh coriander & sliced avocado. Pour over a little zesty juice from your onion jar



Leftover Rice – never a problem!

It's always a good idea to cook extra rice as often we're hungry and pressed for time in the evenings. So having some already cooked and in the fridge is a great, healthy base for an easy assembly meal in the evening. This is one of my favourite things to do with leftover rice.

It doesn't really have a name, I just call it....



Rice & Mackerel with Lemon & Ginger

Ingredients:

- 1 portion cooked rice
- 1 portion frozen peas
- 1 tin or fresh fillet mackerel (drain tin)
- 1 tsp grated ginger
- 1 tsp soy sauce
- Juice lemon

Method:

1. Put the peas in the microwave and cook for 3 mins. Add rice for the last minute to reheat.
2. Drain the peas and transfer to your eating bowl or plate.
3. Flake in the mackerel and mix through.
4. Add the ginger, lemon juice and soy sauce.
5. Taste and add more if you like.

So easy, quick, delicious and healthy.



Easy Fried Rice

Ingredients:

- 2 tsp. oil
- 1 egg (beaten)
- 2 rashers (chopped)
- 8 to 10 mushrooms (sliced)
- 1 mug frozen peas
- 1 clove garlic (crushed)
- 1 tsp. ginger (grated)
- 2 tsp. soy sauce
- 1 tsp. sugar
- 250 g cooked rice

Method:

1. Heat the oil in a frying pan and tip in the beaten egg.
2. Leave to set for 30 seconds to 1 minute, while also swirling it around the pan. Then tip it out and cut it into thin slices.
3. Add bacon and mushrooms to pan and fry until golden, about 3 mins.
4. Add peas, garlic & ginger cooking for 1 minute more.
5. Mix the soy sauce and sugar together in a small bowl. Turn up the heat.
6. Add the cooked rice to the pan and heat through.
7. Pour in the sweet soy sauce mix.
8. Stir through the egg and serve straight away adding more soy sauce or grated ginger if you like



Peanut Butter Flapjacks

A healthy snack alternative without using any refined sugars while also using up your blackened bananas. Can easily be made vegan too.

Ingredients:

- 3 ripe bananas
- 200 g oats
- 50 g raisins or any dried fruits
- 80 g mixed seeds
- 3 tbsp. peanut butter (or almond butter or tahini)
- 1 tbsp. melted butter or coconut oil
- 2 tbsp. honey or maple syrup
- 1 tsp cinnamon



Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C.
2. Grease and line a baking tray (a tray about the same size as an A4 page is good)
3. In a mixing bowl mash the bananas with a fork. Add the oats, dried fruit and seeds. Stir well.
4. In a small pot melt the coconut oil or butter. Add the peanut butter, maple syrup & cinnamon.
5. Pour the oil mixture over the bananas and oats, stir to combine.
6. Transfer the mixture to your lined baking tray and spread to an even thickness.
7. Bake in the oven for 30 to 35 mins until golden brown (**DON'T** over bake as the oats will turn bitter, you have been warned!)
8. Place a sheet of tin foil loosely over the top of the tray about half way through baking.
9. When your flapjacks are a light golden, remove from the oven and let sit in the tray for a few mins before lifting out.
10. Slide off the paper and leave to cool completely on a rack before slicing.

