

A top-down view of a white ceramic bowl filled with a vegetable soup. The soup contains rotini pasta, sliced carrots, chickpeas, and green vegetables like celery and zucchini. Fresh green herbs are scattered on top. A wooden-handled spoon is placed in the bowl. The bowl sits on a light-colored marble surface, with a red and white checkered cloth partially visible at the bottom right. In the background, there are lemon slices and fresh parsley leaves.

**Love Food that Loves You Back**

# **HEALTH BITES**

**25 Recipes for Plant Strong Eating**

**A Free eCookbook from the Kitchen of New-Start Cooking Club**

**Suzi Gilmore**

# Welcome to My **KITCHEN**

You've probably heard someone say, "You are what you eat." It's so true. What we put on our plate is really the key to living longer and feeling better. It's easy to thrive when we eat more plant foods—more vegetables, fruits, whole grains, nuts and seeds. These are the foods that love us back.

That's why I started a plant-based cooking club. Because I discovered the amazing difference that plant foods can have in your life. You can have more health and less medicine, more energy and less fatigue. You can even prevent and reverse heart disease and type 2 diabetes. It can all happen-- one bite at a time.

That's what New-Start cooking is all about—helping you to live well naturally. I wish you could stop by and taste it for yourself. That's why I wrote this ebook. I want you to see how delicious plant foods can be. Every month we offer free classes in Flint, Michigan. We always have a tasting buffet where you can sample the recipes for the night. This eCookbook contains a selection of recipes from some of our most popular classes. I hope you'll enjoy this cookbook and see for yourself just how tasty New-Start cooking can be.

Happy Cooking!

*Chef Suzi*

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# MAINS

## Mexican Extravaganza

Traditional Mexican cooking is packed with a colorful array of fruits and vegetables. And don't forget the corn. As the saying goes, "Mexico is corn and corn is Mexico." Mix it up with some beans and tomatoes and you have the foundation for authentic Mexican cuisine.

All those vibrant colors let you know you're getting maximum nutrition as well as plenty of flavor. I call it "food that loves you back." The more colorful the ingredients, the more antioxidant power you're biting into. And that means reduced inflammation, the main culprit for chronic disease across America, such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, Alzheimer's disease and many types of cancer.

But when you eat Mexican dishes, which are rich in plant foods, the more your health will soar. You can lower cholesterol and high blood pressure, prevent plaque buildup in your arteries and veins and substantially lower your risk for heart attacks and strokes.

Our MAIN recipes give you plenty of ways to enjoy more heart-smart meals so you can live well naturally.



# Burrito Pie



*A creamy pie made with layers of Mexican flavor. Burrito pie is like eating Mexican lasagna.*

Prep Time	Cook Time	Serves
15 min	20 min	4-6

- 4-6 yellow corn tortillas**
- 2-3 cups cooked pinto beans**
- 1 cup chopped tomatoes**
- 1 cup chopped onions**
- 1 cup sliced black olives**
- 1 ½ cups Garden Cream Sauce**

- 1 Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.
- 2 In an 8x11 baking dish, layer the ingredients in this order—corn tortillas (slightly overlap), cooked beans, tomatoes, onions, black olives and a thin layer of Garden Cream Sauce spread over the vegetables.
- 3 Repeat these layers 2-3 times until you reach the top of your baking dish.
- 4 Finish by topping the pie with a layer of tortillas. Spread with the remaining sauce.
- 5 Bake for 20 minutes or until Burrito Pie is hot and bubbly.
- 6 If desired, garnish with some sprigs of fresh cilantro.

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**Health Bite on Pinto Beans:** Beans are a star player in traditional Mexican cooking. They also stand out as a key player for heart health. All beans or legumes have high amounts of fiber which can help you lower cholesterol and your risk for heart disease.

## Garden Cream Sauce



*A thick and creamy sauce made with whole food goodness.*

Prep Time	Cook Time	Serves
10 min	none	2 ½ cups

**1 cup water**  
**¼ cup walnut pieces**  
**¼ cup almond slices or slivers**  
**¼ cup lemon juice**  
**½ cup cooked brown rice**  
**1 red bell pepper, chopped**  
**¼ cup nutritional yeast flakes**  
**2 tsp onion powder**  
**1 tsp salt or salt substitute**  
**1 tsp garlic powder**  
**2-3 tsp dried parsley flakes**

- 1 Pour the water into a blender. Add the nuts and whiz into a milky liquid.
- 2 Add the lemon juice and rice (these ingredients create the creaminess of this tangy sauce).
- 3 Add the remaining ingredients, beginning with the chopped peppers. Continue processing until the mixture becomes smooth, creamy and orange in color. If your blender needs a little extra help in processing, add more lemon juice, one tablespoon at a time.
- 4 Store in the refrigerator in an air-tight container or glass jar. The Garden Cream Sauce will keep for up to 10 days.

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**Chef Suzi's Tip:** This sauce is a great topping for baked tortilla chips and over brown rice and potatoes. Use it as a cream sauce in any Mexican recipe.

# Whole Corn for Whole Health

Eat more whole grains like whole corn for whole health.

- **Lower blood pressure.** In a Women's Health Study, those who ate 4 servings of whole grains lowered their risk for high blood pressure by at least 23%.
- **Prevent diabetes.** People who regularly eat whole grains are 61% less likely to develop type 2 diabetes.
- **Manage your weight.** The fiber in whole grains is an important ally in losing weight. It keeps you feeling full for much longer, which can often curb the urge to snack or overeat.
- **Reduce cancer.** Whole grains are high in fiber which translates into a leaner you. When you lower your weight, you automatically lower your risk for many cancers.

Whole corn is also a natural way to build a strong defense team in your body. The high levels of vitamin A in corn strengthen your body's ability to fight off many viruses and diseases.







## A Taste of Tuscany MAINS

Mama Mia! One of our popular cooking classes led us to balmy Tuscany in the heart of Italy. Where vineyards cover the landscape and Tuscan main dishes center around a bowl of beans. In fact, Tuscans are often called *mangia-fagioli* (which is Italian for bean eaters).

Italian cuisine includes a wide variety of bean dishes. You'll find them in pastas, salads, on top of crusty whole wheat bread and in many soups and stews. If you ever have the chance to visit Italy, you'll discover there's a bean for every region of the country! The most popular bean in Tuscany is cannellini, a tender white bean with a slightly nutty flavor. Other favorites include lentils, cranberry beans (known as *barlotti*), chickpeas, and fava beans.

The people in Tuscany eat their beans with many fruits and vegetables. Quite a few of them are unique to the Tuscan landscape, such as the Lari cherry. They also have Italian apples, pears and peaches, different varieties than we have, but with the same sweetness and nutrition. Tuscans also love their whole wheat breads. They are thick and crusty, and that's perfectly fine because they use them in many of their soups and also for dipping in thick, creamy sauces.

In our Taste of Tuscany cooking class, we discovered some of the best main dishes from the heart of Italy.

# Kale Bruschetta



*A tasty open sandwich topped with cannellini beans and served with a delicious Tuscany sauce.*

Prep Time	Cook Time	Serves
10 min	25 min	4

**15 ounce can cannellini beans, drained**  
**½ cup finely chopped onions**  
**2 finely chopped garlic cloves**  
**1 bay leaf**  
**½ tsp salt or salt substitute**  
**2 cups chopped baby kale**  
**2 T low-sodium vegetable broth**  
**2 T lemon juice**  
**1 cup diced tomatoes**  
**1 loaf of whole-grain Italian bread**

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Place the bread on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake on the bottom rack of the oven for 15 minutes or until lightly toasted (if whole grain Italian bread is not available, toast your favorite whole wheat bread).
2. While the bread is toasting, mix the beans with the onions, garlic, bay leaf and salt in a 3 quart saucepan. Bring to a boil, then simmer on low for 8-10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. Stir in the kale. Cover and cook for 5 minutes or until the kale is tender. Remove from heat.
4. Stir in the vegetable broth, lemon juice and tomatoes. Remove the bay leaf. Season to taste with salt and basil, if desired.
5. Spoon the bruschetta mixture on each slice of the toasted bread. Serve immediately.

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**Chef Suzi's Tip:** Kale is a common green used in Tuscan cooking and a delicious way to boost your heart health. Try other greens as well, such as swiss chard, turnip greens, collards, boy choy and others.

## Cannellini Vegetable Soup



*A hearty Italian soup, filled with colorful vegetables and creamy cannellini beans.*

Prep Time	Cook Time	Servings
20 min	50 min	8

**2 (15 oz) cans cannellini beans, drained**  
**1 T low-sodium vegetable broth**  
**1 cup chopped onion**  
**2 chopped carrots**  
**2 chopped celery stalks**  
**2 minced garlic cloves**  
**2 tsp oregano**  
**1 tsp basil**  
**1 tsp sage**  
**14 oz can diced tomatoes with juice**  
**4 cups low-sodium vegetable broth**  
**2 cups baby spinach leaves**  
**1 ½ cups diced zucchini**  
**1 tsp salt or salt substitute**

1. In a small bowl, mash 1 can of beans with the back of a fork or spoon; set aside.
2. In a soup pot, cook the carrots until they are *nearly* tender in 2 cups of vegetable broth.
3. Meanwhile, heat one tablespoon of broth in a frying pan over medium-high heat. Add the onions, celery, zucchini, garlic, salt and herbs. Stir occasionally until the vegetables are tender (about 5 minutes).
4. Add the cooked carrots with the broth. Also add the tomatoes with their juice along with the remaining 2 cups of vegetable broth. Bring to a boil.
5. Add the mashed beans, the remaining can of whole cannellini beans and the spinach leaves. Cook until the spinach is slightly wilted—about 3 minutes more. Serve immediately.

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**Chef Suzi's Tips:** Warm the cannellini beans in the microwave for a minute or 2. This softens the beans and makes it easier to mash them. You can substitute one tablespoon of garlic powder in place of the whole garlic cloves.

# Tuscan Spaghetti Balls



*Fill up your plate with a bowl of pasta, topped with these vegetable spaghetti balls.*

Prep Time	Cook Time	Servings
15 min	40 min	6

**2 cups raw potatoes, peeled & shredded**  
**1 tablespoon soy flour**  
**1 medium onion, chopped fine**  
**2 tsp sage**  
**2 tsp dried basil**  
**1 cup whole wheat crumbs**  
**1 cup ground walnuts**  
**1 ½ tsp salt or salt substitute**  
**2 T nutritional yeast flakes**

1. Grind the nuts in a blender, then add to a medium-size mixing bowl. Set aside.
2. Peel the potatoes and shred in a food processor or with a hand grater.
3. Mix the potatoes and nuts together; add the remaining ingredients. Mix thoroughly.
4. Let the mixture sit for about 10 minutes. This helps it firm up more. You could also refrigerate the mix for 15-20 minutes.
5. Form into balls and place on a baking sheet that has been lined with parchment paper. Bake for 30 minutes in a 350 degree oven.
6. Cover with a creamy tomato or mushroom sauce. Bake for additional 10 minutes, covered.

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**Chef Suzi's Tip:** You can make this recipe gluten-free by using gluten-free bread crumbs. You can also blend cornflakes into a flour and use these instead.



# Soups and Salads



## Live Longer – Feel Better

Do you know someone who is 100 years old or older? Not many of us reach that ripe, old age. But there are people all over the world who are doing it. Dan Buettner, a journalist working with *National Geographic* magazine, brought these people into the limelight. Buettner traveled to five key regions of the world where reaching 100 was pretty normal. Now these places are known as the Blue Zones.

Ikaria, Greece is one of the Blue Zones. It's a tiny island in the Aegean Sea where the Greeks rarely suffer from dementia and one out of 3 people lives past 90 years old.

How do they do it? One key that Buettner and his team discovered is that most people living there grow their own fruits and vegetables. It's the mainstay of their healthy lifestyle. Favorite foods include home-grown potatoes, beans like garbanzos, black-eyed peas and lentils, plus plenty of greens. Very little meat or dairy products are eaten on the island.

# It's Not about Geography

What is it like living in the Blue Zones? People in Ikaria and other places round the world are living happy, productive lives. They have a purpose when they get up in the morning. They're not bed-ridden and dependent on someone else to care for them. They still lead meaningful lives in their family and community.

In some Blue Zones, the risk for heart disease is cut in half. In other places, there's only  $\frac{1}{4}$  the risk for getting cancer.

Sound good? You can have it too. And you don't have to move to the other side of the world. You see, Blue Zone living isn't about geography. It's about making lifestyle choices. And many of those choices are tied to what we eat no matter where we live.

In the Blue Zones, 95% of the foods people eat come from plant foods. In Ikaria, Greece, 75% of their diet comes from leafy greens. Eating a daily salad is one way you can join the Blue Zones Revolution and start living longer and feeling better.



## Greek Salad



*A colorful salad packed with Italian vegetables, chickpeas and a tangy tahini dressing.*

Prep Time	Cook Time	Servings
15 min	none	8

**1 head Romaine lettuce**  
**½ red bell pepper, thinly sliced**  
**¼ red onion, thinly sliced**  
**1 cup chopped tomatoes**  
**½ large cucumber, thinly sliced**  
**2 green onions, thinly sliced**  
**½ cup halved black olives**  
**1 avocado, cut in chunks**  
**15 oz can chickpeas, drained**  
**Serving of Tahini Dressing (next page)**

1. Add the following ingredients to a salad bowl: shredded lettuce, peppers, onions, tomatoes, cucumbers, olives and avocado chunks. Toss lightly to mix the vegetables together.
2. Roast the Chickpeas. Drain and rinse a can of chickpeas. Place in a medium size bowl with a teaspoon of salt, ½ teaspoon each of onion powder, basil and oregano. Also add 1 teaspoon of garlic powder. Mix the herbs with the chickpeas until the beans are evenly covered. Lay the beans in a single layer on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake in a preheated 425 degree oven for 20-30 minutes or until the beans are crunchy.
3. When the beans are done, add them to the salad and toss all ingredients.

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**Lettuce Health-Bite:** Lettuce comes in a variety of colors. The more colorful it is, the more loaded with health-building antioxidants and other nutrients. When it comes to lettuce, a red Romaine provides more nutrition than a light green one. A spinach salad will have more perks than a salad with iceberg lettuce. Look for the brightest and dark-est colors in choosing greens for your next salad.



## SALAD DRESSING

# Tahini Dressing



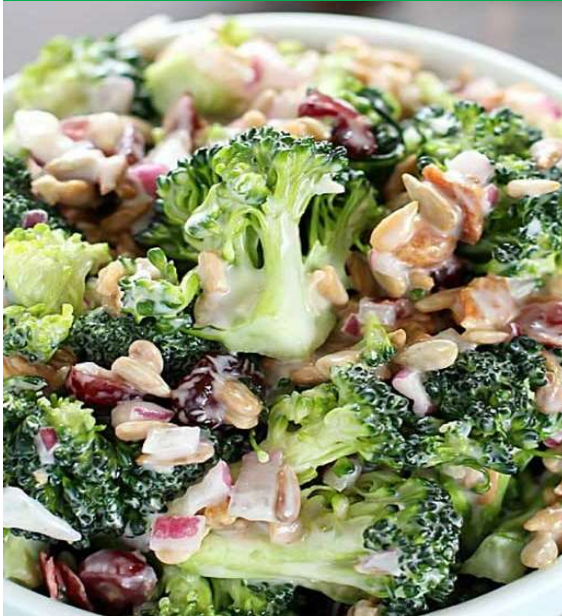
*A nutty and tangy dressing made from tahini, a delicious nut butter made from sesame seeds.*

Prep Time	Cook Time	Servings
5 min	none	½ cup

**2 T tahini**  
**2 T water**  
**1 ½ T low-sodium vegetable broth**  
**2 ½ T lemon juice**  
**1 T maple syrup**  
**½ tsp salt or salt substitute**  
**1 tsp dried basil or oregano**

1. Add all the dressing ingredients to a mini food-processor or blender. Whiz until smooth and creamy. Or you can simply whisk all the ingredients in a small bowl.
2. If the dressing is too thick, add some water, one tablespoon at a time. You want the dressing to be pourable but not watery.
3. Taste and adjust the seasonings, as needed.
4. Pour the dressing over the Greek salad; toss and taste.

# Broccoli Salad



*A broccoli lover's dream salad, filled with creamy crunchiness.*

Prep Time	Cook Time	Servings
10 min	none	4

**Large head of broccoli**  
**½ cup raisins**  
**1 medium onion, chopped**  
**½ cup sunflower seeds**  
**½ cup sliced black olives**

**TOFU DRESSING**  
**1 cup non-dairy low-fat sour cream**  
**2 T lemon juice**  
**2 T organic cane sugar**

1. Combine the salad ingredients in a large bowl; set aside.
2. Make the Tofu Dressing: combine the non-dairy sour cream, lemon juice and sugar in a small bowl. Mix together.
3. Pour the dressing over the salad and toss gently. Serve immediately or chill in the refrigerator.

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**Chef Suzi's Tip:** High fat toppings can easily undermine all the benefits of a garden-rich salad. But not when you make your own. A plant-based sour cream won't sabotage your health goals but will only add maximum nutrition to your dish. Here's an easy sour cream I often use with this broccoli salad. It only takes 5 minutes to whip up and it's so delicious!

**12 oz of firm organic tofu**  
**2-3 T lemon juice**  
**1 T vegetable broth**  
**1 tsp turmeric**  
**1 tsp salt or salt substitute**  
**½ tsp of onion and garlic powder**  
**2 tsp dill weed**

Add all the ingredients to a blender except for the dill weed. Process until smooth and creamy. Add a little water, as needed, to keep your blender operating freely. You can also adjust the seasonings to suit your taste. Remove the mixture from the blender; add in the dill weed. Chill before serving.

# Garden Lentil Stew



*Enjoy a thick lentil stew using veggies from the garden—just as the Greeks from Ikaria do.*

Prep Time	Cook Time	Servings
10 min	30-40 min	8

**2 cups cooked brown lentils**  
**7 ½ cups water, divided**  
**1 medium onion, chopped**  
**½ pound of sliced mushrooms**  
**2 stalks celery, diced**  
**2 carrots, peeled, sliced and cooked**  
**¼ cup low sodium vegetable broth**  
**15 oz can diced tomatoes**  
**1 tsp garlic powder**  
**1 T dried parsley**  
**1 bay leaf**  
**Salt and basil to taste**

1. Cook lentils in 6 cups of water for about 30 minutes.
2. While the lentils are cooking, saute' onions, mushrooms, and celery in a skillet with the vegetable broth. Cook for about 5 minutes
3. Add the cooked carrots, 1 ½ cups water, tomatoes and seasonings to the cooked lentils.
4. Continue cooking for about 10 more minutes. Serve immediately

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**Chef's Suzi's Tip:** To shorten the cooking time, you can precook the lentils using an Instant Pot. Use twice the amount of water as lentils (i.e. 2 cups water to one cup of lentils). Cook on manual pressure for 5 minutes; pressure release for an another 5 minutes. Leftovers of this soup can easily be frozen for a future lunch or dinner.



## A Paradise Destination

A little bit of Paradise isn't very far away. But it's worlds apart in terms of living longer and feeling better. The Nicoya Peninsula in Costa Rica is an 80 mile stretch of land, just south of Nicaragua. There you'll find Costa Ricans living long and healthy lives. Very few die before they reach the age of 75. They also hold 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the world for having the highest number of men who live past 100 years of age. Welcome to Costa Rica, one of our destination spots on our Blue Zones cooking tour.

## Costa Rican Confetti Salad



*A taste of Paradise with all the flavor of a Caribbean vacation.*

Prep Time	Cook Time	Servings
10 min	30 min (rice only)	8

**3 cups cooked brown rice**  
**15 oz can kidney beans, drained**  
**15 oz can black beans, drained**  
**1 ½ cups fresh or frozen corn**  
**4 green onions, thinly sliced**  
**1 red pepper, cored and diced**  
**¼ cup minced fresh parsley or cilantro**

### LIME DRESSING

**¼ cup lime juice**  
**2 T lemon juice**  
**2 T vegetable broth or Liquid Aminos**  
**½ tsp salt or salt substitute**  
**½ tsp dried basil**

1. In a large bowl, combine all the salad ingredients and toss.
2. Make the Lime Dressing: In a small bowl, whisk together all the ingredients. Set aside.
3. Pour the dressing over the salad; toss to coat.
4. Chill the salad for about 2 hours before serving to allow the flavors to blend.

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**Chef's Suzi Tips:** Even though this recipe is a salad, it can also be enjoyed as a main dish because it is a bean salad. You can also cut the prep time for this dish by making the brown rice a day ahead or making it in a rice cooker or Instant Pot. In the Instant Pot, cook on manual heat for 22 minutes; manually release the pressure and you're all set for creating this delicious salad.

# Instant Pot Squash Soup



*Kick start your day with this creamy squash soup. This could soon become your next comfort food.*

Prep Time	Cook Time	Servings
15 min	20 min	6

**1 medium onion, chopped**  
**1 medium to large butternut squash, peeled and cubed**  
**2 medium sweet potatoes**  
**1 apple, cut in 1-inch pieces**  
**½ tsp coriander**  
**Pinch of cardamom (opt.)**  
**½ tsp salt or salt substitute**  
**Basil to taste**  
**4 cups vegetable broth**

1. Chop the onion and saute' in a small saucepan for 3 minutes on the stove. Cook in 2-3 tablespoons of vegetable broth or water.
2. Peel and cube the squash and sweet potatoes. Core and chop the apple into one-inch pieces.
3. When sauteeing is complete, add the squash, apple and sweet potatoes to the Instant Pot. Add the vegetable broth.
4. Cook on Soups/Stews for 10 minutes. Release steam when time is up.
5. Open the pot and add remaining ingredients. Mix these in with a spoon.
6. Blend the soup with an immersion blender or remove carefully and process in a regular blender. It will only take a minute or two to blend til creamy.
7. Serve immediately or keep warm until serving.





## SIDES

### Eat Well – Live Well

In our New-Start Cooking Club, our #1 goal is to live well naturally. But how do we get there? If we look at our health as if we were building a house, the foundation is what we eat. More and more people are discovering that eating more plants is the way to do it. Here's a few ways you can get started.

#### **Eat Foods High in Fiber**

A diet high in fiber is linked to lower cholesterol and blood pressure plus a lower risk for heart disease and cancer. Fiber is also your friend when it comes to reaching a healthy weight. 25 grams of fiber a day is a healthy goal to shoot for. If you want to lose weight, increase it to 30 grams. Choose beans, whole grains, and many fruits and vegetables for a fiber-rich diet.

#### **Go Low on Fat**

Foods that are high in saturated fat can increase your risk for heart disease (such as meat, cheese and other dairy foods). Foods with one gram of saturated fat or less are safest for your heart's health. All foods have some fat in them, but plant foods will provide you with the lowest amount of saturated fat.



# Be a First Class Foodie

## **Eat Plenty of Color**

Another way to live well naturally is by eating colorful foods. The brighter the color, the more antioxidants you'll have. And that means you can have a stronger immune system. By eating a wide range of colorful fruits and vegetables, your body is better equipped to fight off invading viruses and germs. Fruits and vegetables offer top-notch protection in the battle against disease, including heart disease, diabetes, and cancer.

- **Eat More Red:** tomatoes, red bell peppers, red cabbage and lettuces, red berries, red onions, and radishes.
- **Eat More Purple and Blue:** blueberries, blackberries, purple grapes, eggplant, prunes, black olives, raisins and plums.
- **Eat More Green:** broccoli, kale, avocado, spinach, collards, turnip greens, brussel sprouts, cabbages, green apples and kiwis.
- **Eat More Orange and Yellow:** carrots, sweet potatoes, winter squashes, corn, oranges, cantaloupe, peaches and mangoes.



# Harvest Roasted Carrots



*Bring out the sweetness of carrots by roasting them with herbs and using a touch of maple syrup.*

Prep Time	Cook Time	Servings
15 min	30 min	6

**2 pounds carrots, peeled and cut**  
**2 T vegetable broth**  
**2 tsp maple syrup**  
**1 tsp dried thyme**  
**1 tsp dried oregano**  
**3 T finely chopped flat-leaf parsley**  
**½ to 1 tsp salt or salt substitute**  
**1 tsp dried basil**

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper, large enough to fit all the carrots.
2. Peel and trim the carrots. Cut them in sixths lengthwise, depending on the size of your carrots. Then cut into 2 inch lengths. If you have thin carrots, like the ones pictured above, you can roast them whole.
3. Place all the carrot pieces in a large bowl. Toss them with the vegetable broth, salt, herbs and maple syrup.
4. Spread the carrots in an even layer on the baking sheet. Cover with foil.
5. Bake in the oven for 30 minutes; if the carrots aren't tender enough, uncover the pan, lower the heat to 375 degrees and roast for 10-15 minutes more or until the carrots are fork-tender.
6. Add the parsley; stir gently.
7. Adjust the flavors, as desired. Serve hot.

## Polish Tomatoes



*A delicious side using thickly cut tomatoes, marinated with onions and herbs. My Polish friends say, with a twinkle in their eye, that tomatoes grow this way naturally in Poland. I like to think so too!*

Prep Time	Cook Time	Servings
10 min	none	6

**4 cups thickly sliced fresh tomatoes**  
**1 medium onion, sliced in rings**  
**2 T lemon juice**  
**2 T low-sodium vegetable broth**  
**2 tsp dried basil**  
**2 tsp dried oregano**  
**2 tsp garlic powder**  
**¼ cup dried parsley or ½ cup fresh**  
**1 tsp salt or salt substitute**

1. Prepare the tomatoes and onions. Mix together in a medium-size bowl.
2. In a small bowl, mix the remaining ingredients.
3. Add to the tomatoes and onions; stir together.
4. Chill in the refrigerator overnight. This allows the ingredients to marinate, bringing out their incredible flavor.

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***Eating vegetables is a great way  
to nourish your body.***

# Pizza Potatoes



*A new way to enjoy a baked potato. Is it a side dish or is it your next lunch?*

Prep Time	Cook Time	Servings
10 min	40 min	1

**1 large baking potato**  
**Serving of Health Bites Ketchup**  
**or a serving of Spinachi Tomato Sauce**  
**Your choice of vegetable toppings**  
**Fresh basil (opt.)**  
**Garden Cream Sauce**

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Start with a potato that is at least 1 ½ inches across the middle. Scrub potato well, then slice length-wise into 3-4 slices, making the outer 2 slices wider than the middle one. Trim any pieces on the bottom to make them lie flat.
3. Place potato slices on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper; bake for 40 minutes, until cooked thoroughly. When the potatoes are fork-tender, remove them from the oven.
4. Spread each potato with ketchup or tomato sauce. Top with your favorite vegetables, such as onions, peppers, chopped zucchini, black or green olives, and/or mushrooms.
5. Remove from the oven and sprinkle with an ample serving of fresh basil, if desired. Or you can drizzle some Garden Cream Sauce on top (found in our Mains section of this ebook).
6. Allow to cool slightly before serving.

**Chef Suzi's Tip:** For a single serving of pizza potatoes, you could also bake the potatoes in a toaster oven.

## SIDES DRESSING

# Health Bites Ketchup



*An easy and healthy ketchup to use with baked fries, potato pizzas and other Health Bites recipes.*

Prep Time	Cook Time	Servings
5 min	none	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup

**6 oz tomato paste**  
**2 T lemon juice**  
 **$\frac{1}{2}$  cup water**  
**2 tsp maple syrup or honey**  
 **$\frac{1}{2}$  tsp salt or salt substitute**  
 **$\frac{1}{2}$  tsp onion powder**  
 **$\frac{1}{2}$  tsp garlic powder**  
 **$\frac{1}{2}$  tsp basil**

1. Combine the tomato paste, lemon juice and water in a small bowl. Mix together until the liquids are well blended with the paste.
2. Stir in the maple syrup or honey.
3. Add the remaining ingredients. Stir until blended thoroughly.
4. Store in an air-tight container or jar in the refrigerator. The ketchup will keep a couple of weeks in the fridge.

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**Ketchup Health-Bite:** Did you know that commercial ketchup has more sugar per cup than ice-cream? This is because most companies use high fructose corn syrup to sweeten it up. High fructose corn syrup has been linked to many health problems, including type 2 diabetes, high triglyceride levels and obesity. Wouldn't you like a health-ier alternative? Our recipe only takes a few minutes to make and will keep a couple of weeks in your refrigerator.

## Sweet Beets



*A side of sliced or chopped beets sitting in a thick sauce of lemon juice and honey. Sprinkle in some orange zest and you're got a delicious side for lunch or dinner.*

Prep Time	Cook Time	Servings
5 min	10 min	2

**15 oz can beets, sliced or in chunks**  
**½ cup beet juice from the can**  
**1 T cornstarch**  
**½ tsp salt or salt substitute**  
**2 T lemon juice**  
**1 T honey or maple syrup**  
**1 T orange zest**

1. Mix the cornstarch and salt together. Whisk in the beet juice.
2. Add the lemon juice and the honey or maple syrup.
3. Pour into a small saucepan. Simmer, stirring occasionally, until the beet juice thickens.
4. Add the beets. Heat for a few minutes to allow the flavors of the sauce to blend with the flavor of the beets.
5. Serve immediately.

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**Chef Suzi's Tip:** You can use sliced, quartered or beets cut up in chunks (such as in the picture above). If the beets are small, you can cook them whole. Sweet Beets are a great addition to your holiday menus.

# Sweet Potato Supreme



*A colorful addition to your Thanksgiving holiday table or any time of year.*

Prep Time	Cook Time	Servings
10 min	40-60 min	4

**4 sweet potatoes**  
**1 ½ cups cooked brown rice**  
**2-3 garlic cloves, minced**  
**6 cups baby spinach leaves**  
**¼ cup walnut or pecan pieces**  
**¼ cup dried cranberries**  
**1 tsp salt or salt substitute**  
**1 tsp basil**

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Bake the sweet potatoes for 40-60 minutes on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Or you can bake them in a crock-pot—cook on low overnight or on high for 4 hours. To bake them in an Instant Pot, scrub the potatoes well; place them on your steamer rack or basket. Cook on high for 15 minutes. Allow pressure to release naturally—for about 10 minutes.
2. Cook the brown rice according to package directions. You can also cook brown rice in an Instant Pot. Cook on high using the manual button for 22 minutes. I make a pot of brown rice using 4 cups rice to 6 cups water.
3. While the sweet potatoes are baking, saute' the garlic in a few tablespoons of water or vegetable broth. Cook over a medium-high heat.
4. Add 3 cups of spinach. Stir until the leaves begin to wilt. Add the remaining spinach and cook for 3-4 more minutes. Remove the pan from the heat. Add the cooked rice to the spinach along with the remaining ingredients.
5. When the sweet potatoes are soft and tender, remove them from the oven. Allow them to cool slightly, then slice in half length-wise.
6. With a small spoon, make an indentation in the center. Fill this hollowed spot with the spinach-rice filling. Serve while hot.







# Breakfast

## Shake Up Your Wake-Up

How do you start your day? Most Americans grab a doughnut and a cup of coffee or they skip breakfast all together. But breakfast can make such a big difference in how your life. It has the power to boost your mood, improve your memory, and help your brain to work better. It helps you work more efficiently, without making too many mistakes. And you won't feel that mid-morning lag or feel the urge to hit the snack machine.

Breakfast is the best time to fuel up for the morning. After sleeping 7-8 hours, your body needs to replenish its energy. The best fuel is found in complex carbohydrates. I know carbs have been given a bad rap these days. But there are good carbs and bad carbs. Simple carbs like sugar-sweetened cereals and super sweet desserts rob your body of essential B vitamins (for better stress control), spike your blood sugars and pile on unwanted pounds. But complex carbs that we find in whole grains, fruits and vegetables, fuel you up without any bad side-effects. You can tap into energy and health all morning long.

Start your day with whole grains, such as a bowl of steel-cut oatmeal, topped with some blueberries or applesauce. Try a variety of whole grains for breakfast, including brown rice, quinoa, whole wheat, corn or oats.

Fruit is another healthy option for shaking up your wake-up. A thick berry sauce is my favorite topping for waffles or French toast. Or how about a juicy tangerine on the side? The antioxidants found in fresh fruit, especially in berries, boost learning, coordination and memory.

But isn't fruit a simple sugar? That is true, but fruit isn't in the same category as a candy bar or a dish of icecream. There's a big difference between the two and the difference is fiber. The fiber we find in fruit will help the sugars to be released more slowly into the bloodstream, giving you a more steady supply of energy rather than a quick spike that will disappear all too quickly.

Enjoy fruit for breakfast in many healthy ways. Eat it whole or dice it up in a fruit salad. Heat it up, thicken it with some cornstarch and spoon it over granola or toast.

Have you ever tried beans for breakfast? Many cultures around the world start their morning this way. In Mexico, breakfast can be black beans on a tostada. In London, it can be baked beans over toast. In America, the breakfast burrito is changing the morning landscape of good food. There are so many delicious ways to shake up your wake-up. Let's fuel up for a great morning!



# Rise-n-Shine Muesli



*Rev up your mornings with 4 different fruits and a bowl of oats. It's our most popular cereal at New-Start Cooking Club.*

Prep Time	Cook Time	Servings
15 min	15 min	4

**20 oz can pineapple tidbits**  
**1 tsp salt**  
**1 ½ tsp vanilla extract**  
**3 cups rolled oats, uncooked**  
**1-2 bananas, chopped**  
**2 large apples, unpeeled, finely chopped**  
**½ cup raisins**  
**¼ cup unsweetened coconut flakes**  
**¼ cup almond slivers (opt.)**

1. Pour oats in a medium mixing bowl. Add the pineapple tidbits with the juice.
2. Mix in the salt and vanilla. Set aside.
3. Chop up the banana(s) and apples in bite-size pieces.
4. Add the remaining ingredients.
5. Mix thoroughly. Serve immediately.

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**Chef Suzi's Tips:** Some people enjoy muesli with a splash of almond or soy milk. My family prefers it plain. We think it's a moist cereal on its own. Why not try it both ways and see which way you like it best?

You can also vary the fruits in this recipe. I usually include bananas and a crunchy fruit like apples or pears. Sometimes, I include peaches, strawberries, blueberries or a frozen berry mixture in my muesli. Walnut pieces are also a good swap for almonds. Have fun making your own combinations!

# Maple-Oat Waffles



*Bit into some light and fluffy waffles—only 7 ingredients.*

Prep Time	Cook Time	Servings
5 min	8 min each	12 waffles

**2 ½ cups rolled oats**  
**1 ½ cups water**  
**1 ½ cup almond or soy milk**  
**3 T unsweetened applesauce**  
**1-2 tsp maple flavoring**  
**½ tsp salt or salt substitute**  
**1 cup quick oats**

1. Preheat the waffle maker until it is hot.
2. Add all the ingredients to a blender except for the quick oats.
3. Whiz ingredients for a minute or two—until the batter is creamy and smooth.
4. Pour the batter into a mixing bowl. Add the quick oats and blend together.
5. Pour about ½ cup of the batter onto a nonstick waffle maker. Bake for about 7 to 8 minutes, depending on your waffle maker.
6. Remove the baked waffle and set on a serving plate; continue baking the rest of the batter.
7. Serve waffles with desired toppings: nut butter and applesauce, strawberry or blueberry sauce, or chopped soft fruits (peaches and bananas). Sprinkle unsweetened coconut on top for a festive touch.

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**Chef Suzi's Tips:** I usually make a double batch for serving 3 adults in the morning. They are delicious warmed up in the microwave too. You can also freeze extras ahead of time, then warm them up in the toaster or microwave for a quick breakfast on those busy mornings.

# Berry Good Sauce



*Enjoy a luscious berry sauce on your next plate of pancakes or waffles.*

Prep Time	Cook Time	Servings
5 min	15 min	4

**1 cup frozen blueberries**  
**1 cup frozen strawberries**  
**1 cup frozen raspberries**  
**2-3 T sugar**  
**2 tsp cornstarch**

1. Mix 3 cups of berries in a medium saucepan.
2. Add the sugar; stir while the berries get hot.
3. Add a few tablespoons of water, if needed, to keep the fruit from sticking to the pan.
4. In a small cup, mix the cornstarch with equal parts of cool or cold water. Mix until dissolved.
5. When the berries just start to boil, pour in the cornstarch mixture. Stir well. In a few minutes, the berries will start to thicken. Serve immediately.

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**Chef Suzi's Tips:** Make this sauce ahead of time to have it on hand for breakfast. It will stay fresh in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. Enjoy Berry Good Sauce served over waffles, pancakes, French toast, or on toast that's spread with your favorite nut butter.

You can also use a bag of frozen mixed berries to make a quicker berry sauce.

# Breakfast Burrito



*Shake up your Wake-Up fiesta style with this tasty breakfast burrito.*

Prep Time	Cook Time	Servings
20 min	none	2

### TOFU SCRAMBLE

- 14 oz block of extra-firm tofu
- ½ cup water or vegetable broth
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- ½ tsp turmeric
- Salt and basil to taste

### SWEET POTATO FILLING

- 1 medium sweet potato, peeled
- 1 to 1 ½ cups vegetable broth
- ¼ cup diced onion, red or white
- 1 red bell pepper, cored & chopped
- 2 cloves minced garlic
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- Salt and basil to taste

1. Make Tofu Scramble: Crumble the tofu in a skillet with ½ cup of water; stir in the seasonings. Saute' on low to medium heat until the water has evaporated.
2. Make Sweet Potato Filling: Dice onion, pepper, and peeled sweet potato. Place in pan on low to medium heat. Saute' in a few tablespoons of water for a few minutes to soften the onions. Add 1 cup of broth and seasonings. You can also add more water, as needed.
3. Build the Burritos: Place spinach leaves on the bottom of whole grain tortillas. Add the sweet potato filling, tofu scramble and your choice of burrito additions (i.e. salsa, chopped tomatoes, sliced mushrooms and chopped cilantro).

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**Sweet Potato Health-Bites:** Nothing beats fiber when it comes to your digestive health. Fiber helps prevent colon cancer, keeps you regular, and leaves you full between meals. Sweet potatoes are a fiber rich food. Plus they're loaded with 40% of your daily requirement for vitamin A which boosts your immune system in a big way.

# Banana French Toast



*Enjoy a luscious berry sauce over a plate of fruity French toast.*

Prep Time	Cook Time	Servings
10 min	15 min	4

**8 ounces firm tofu, water pack**  
**1 ripe banana**  
**½ cup water**  
**1 tsp maple syrup**  
**1 T vanilla extract**  
**1 tsp coriander**  
**8 slices whole-grain bread**

1. Combine the tofu and water in a blender. Process until the mixture looks like a milk.
2. Add the banana, maple syrup, vanilla and coriander. Process until smooth. Make sure there are no pieces of banana in the batter.
3. Pour the batter into a shallow bowl. Using a spatula, spread the batter on one side of the bread and lay it on a non-stick skillet. While the bread is cooking, spread the batter on the top side.
4. Brown both sides of the French Toast. Set the finished toasts aside on a serving plate.
5. Suggested toppings: nut butter, applesauce, Berry Good Sauce, strawberries blended with applesauce.
6. Store leftovers in a covered container in the refrigerator. You can also freeze these toasts very well.

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**Chef Suzi's Tips:** I recommend using a firm bread for this recipe—a high fiber variety like Ezekiel's Bread would work very well. I like to preheat the non-stick skillet before baking the French toast. As they cook, you can begin to lower the heat.

# Almond Granola



*A nutty granola bursting with whole-grain goodness.*

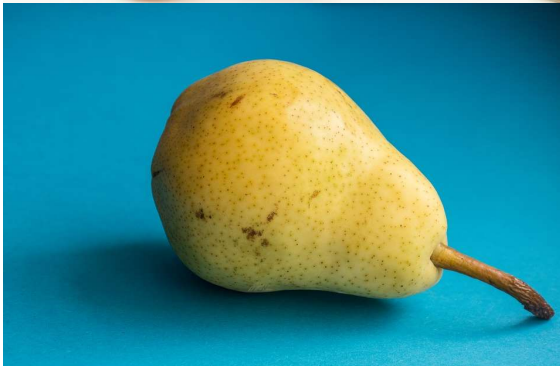
Prep Time	Cook Time	Servings
10 min	cook overnight	6

**10 cups rolled oats**  
**1 cup wheat germ**  
**1 cup unsweetened coconut**  
**1 ½ tsp salt**  
**1 cup almond slices**  
**1 cup raw sunflower seeds**  
**½ cup hot water**  
**1 tsp vanilla extract**  
**2 ripe bananas or 12 ounce can of apple juice concentrate**  
**2 cups raisins**

1. Mix the oats, wheat germ, coconut, almonds and sunflower seeds in a large mixing bowl.
2. In a pitcher, mix the hot water, apple juice concentrate, vanilla extract and salt (if you use ripe bananas instead of the apple juice concentrate, mash the bananas before adding them to the pitcher). Mix with a spoon or whisk.
3. Add the liquids to the dry ingredients and mix thoroughly.
4. Spread the granola mixture onto a non-stick baking sheet or one lined with parchment paper.
5. Set your oven to 200 degrees and allow the granola to bake overnight. This way, you can avoid stirring the granola every 15 minutes which is the traditional method for making granola. Plus, you'll wake up in the morning to the amazing fragrance of baked granola! What could be better?
6. In the morning, pour the granola into a large mixing bowl. Add 2 cups of raisins and stir well.
7. Store the granola in a large sealed container until your next breakfast. Serve with your favorite plant-based milk.



# Breakfast Compote



*A favorite breakfast from my college days was hot fruit served over granola. Breakfast Compote is my version of that recipe today.*

Prep Time	Cook Time	Servings
5 min	20 min	4

**28 oz can peaches, packed in juice**  
**20 oz can pineapple chunks, in juice**  
**20 oz can pear halves, in juice**  
**¼ cup cornstarch**  
**¼ cup water**  
**1 cup raisins**  
**1 tsp coriander (opt.)**  
**2 cups Almond Granola**

1. Drain the juice from the cans of fruit; pour into a medium-size saucepan. Cut the peaches and pears into bite-size pieces. Cook on medium-high heat.
2. While the fruit is cooking, mix the cornstarch and water in a cup. Stir until the mixture resembles milk.
3. When the juice starts to boil, add in the cornstarch mixture. Stir occasionally until the juice begins to thicken.
4. Add the peaches, pineapple, pears and raisins. Cook for 5-10 minutes more.
5. Serve immediately over the granola.

**Chef Suzi's Tips:** Breakfast Compote is a wonderful sauce over pancakes, waffles or French toast. You can also vary the fruit mixture. Apples and sliced berries are great additions. You can also make a Breakfast Parfait—place ½ cup of the compote in a glass cup, spoon ¼ cup of granola on top, then top it off with some additional Breakfast Compote. For a more elegant or festive touch, try serving it in a parfait glass.

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