

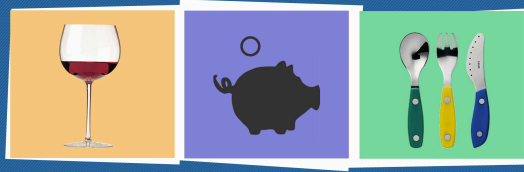


# THE FAMILY MEAL GUIDE



IDEAS FROM OUR DEAL PROS

[savoo.co.uk](http://savoo.co.uk)



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“What’s for dinner?” That’s the age-old question asked in households throughout the country on a daily basis and one which is guaranteed to strike exasperation in even the most organised amongst us.

It doesn’t matter if you’re working all day or running around after the kids, planning and preparing the family main meal of the day isn’t as simple a task as it should be. Deciding what to have for dinner depends not only on finding something that everybody is going to eat, you also need to take into consideration how much it’s going to cost, how nutritious it is and, most importantly it seems, how long it’s going to take to prepare and cook.

This e-book came about by asking normal people who, somehow, have managed to work all these factors into producing tasty, nutritious meals that don’t cost a fortune and won’t have you slaving over a hot stove for hours.

Whether you follow some of the set meal plans you find in this e-book or mix and match to make your own, hopefully you’ll find some new family favourites that won’t leave you scratching your head the next time you’re asked, “What’s for dinner?”

# OUR CONTRIBUTORS

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We know there are a multitude of cookbooks out there but we wanted to find recipes that are used by real people in real families facing the same everyday challenges as the rest of us.



## Blissful Mama

A single mum to a gorgeous little boy, Blissful Mama spends her days balancing working from home with being a mum and both entertaining and educating her toddler son. She's working out living on a budget and still managing to eat good, wholesome, home-cooked food.

Her one food tip? "I think I could plan our meals, giving us more variety, wasting less food and saving time on shopping trips (we go several times a week for a few bits) and on working out what we can eat."

You can read more of Blissful Mama's frugal tips at [A Blissful Life](#).



## Utterly Scrummy

Michelle Rice is the author of Utterly Scrummy, a blog for budget friendly, tasty, easy to prepare, nutritious food for busy families. She lives in Cambridgeshire with her husband and three daughters, working part time for the NHS as well as a School Governor, PCC Member and an enthusiastic organiser and supporter of the local primary school Cookery Club.

When cooking, Michelle aims to keep meals budget-friendly without ruining the taste and nutritious value. She says, "Use leftovers that would otherwise be thrown away to make complete meals or bulk out dishes like soups and casseroles. Make the most of what you buy by buying in bulk and making sure it's stored properly so it doesn't go to waste. Make a list of must-have

staples to always have on hand in the pantry, fridge or freezer."

For more recipes than we can put in this e-book, visit [Utterly Scrummy](#).

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## Hertfordshire Mummy

Emma Perrot is a stay-at-home mum to two beautiful young children, one girl and one boy and the author of Hertfordshire Mummy, a blog full of the ups and downs of parenting, including meal times. She loves living in Hertfordshire and utilises the local community businesses.

With two active young children, Emma hates to spend too many hours in the kitchen (unless, of course, she's cooking or baking with the kids) so one of her favourite tips when it comes to frugal cooking is, "Slow cooking is a perfect way to make meat really tender (so you can opt for cheaper cuts). It also

Slow cooking is a perfect way to make meat really tender (so you can opt for cheaper cuts) it also means that once I have put all the ingredients in I can just leave it, relax and enjoy myself.”

Follow more of Emma’s family recipes on [Hertfordshire Mummy](#).

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### Rosasilium

Elizabeth is the owner of the woman’s lifestyle blog, Rosasilium. She lives with her boyfriend and is a graduate of UCL. She is also a self-confessed foodie who loves cooking, saying, “I share my favourite recipes because I love to eat and cooking is my therapy.”

“I do a meal plan every week so that we have no unnecessary food wastage and buy cheaper, healthier food options.”

See more of Elizabeth’s favourite recipes and follow her thrifty finds at [Rosasilium](#).

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# Soups and Salads

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# Thai Papaya Salad



(Rosasilium)

I have only found ripened papaya in the supermarkets here and the dish in Thailand usually calls for unripe papaya to give that delicious crunch. So instead I pile a spoonful of the salad mixture onto a baby gem lettuce leaf which adds the necessary crunch, provides some cooling respite from the chilli and acts as the perfect spoon for popping the deliciousness into your mouth. I heartily recommend this dish as an interesting accompaniment to a meal as it adds some real interest to the feast!

## Ingredients

- 1 Papaya
- 5 Green Beans halved lengthways
- 4 Cherry Tomatoes halved
- 1 clove of Garlic finely chopped
- 1 Red Bird's Eye Chilli finely chopped (or a regular chilli if you wish it to be milder, and if really desperate for supplies use dried chilli flakes)
- 1 tsp Sugar (preferably palm sugar but golden is fine)
- Handful of Roasted Peanuts
- 1 tbsp Fish Sauce (Nam Pla)
- 1 tbsp of Tamarind Water (or 1 tsp of tamarind paste)
- 1 Lime, juiced
- 1 Baby Gem Lettuce

## Method

1. Peel and shred the Papaya, discarding the core and seeds. Set aside.
2. Put garlic, red chilli and green beans into a pestle and mortar and pound until lightly bruised.
3. Add the sugar, peanuts, fish sauce, tamarind, tomatoes and lime juice and pound further until soften and well mixed.
4. Add the shredded papaya turning well with mixture and pounding once last time.
5. Taste to check the seasoning and adjust as appropriate (remember the cornerstones of Thai cooking!)
6. Spoon complete mixture onto a single baby gem lettuce leaf and serve immediately.

# Spicy Parsnip Soup



(Blissful Mama)

## Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon oil or butter
- 1 small onion
- 2-4 parsnips (depending on size)
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1-2 teaspoons medium curry powder (depending on taste)
- 500ml vegetable stock
- a splash of milk

## Method

- Heat the oil or butter, add the onion and fry until soft
- Add garlic and curry powder and fry a little more
- Add parsnip and stock, bring to the boil and simmer for about 20 minutes or until parsnip is soft
- Remove from heat and blend using a stick blender until smooth.
- Add milk until you have the thickness you want and return to heat to warm through
- Serve with bread and butter

# Broccoli Salad



(Blissful Mama)

## Ingredients

- 1 head of broccoli
- 1 Avocado
- 1 lime
- 1 cup cooked chick peas
- 2 tbsp pine nuts
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 tbsp olive oil

## Method

Lightly steam broccoli so that it is cooked but still firm and leave to cool  
Juice the lime, crush the garlic and mix both with the olive oil  
Chop the avocado into small cubes and cover with the lime/garlic/oil mixture  
Place the broccoli, chick peas, pine nuts and avocado in a bowl gently fold to mix the components  
Add cracked pepper too if you wish.

# Chicken Soup



(Utterly Scrummy)

## Ingredients

- 2 tsp oil
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 pepper, deseeded and diced
- 600ml chicken stock
- 100g frozen mixed vegetables
- 100g leftover roast vegetables
- 300g leftover roast chicken, roughly chopped
- 300ml milk
- 2 tbsp cornflour mixed with 2 tbsp water
- seasoning to taste

## Method

Heat the oil in a large saucepan, add the garlic, onion and pepper. Cook gently until the onion and pepper have softened.

Add the stock, frozen mixed vegetables, leftover roast vegetables and chicken. Bring to the boil and boil until the frozen vegetables are cooked through.

Remove from the heat, stir in the milk and the cornflour dissolved in water. Stir until the soup thickens. Season to taste then serve. We have ours with granary rolls.

# Couscous and Bean Salad



(Utterly Scrummy)

## Ingredients

- 1 cup couscous
- 1 tsp vegetable bouillon
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 250ml/1 cup boiling water
- 1 can mixed beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 stalk celery, finely sliced
- 1 pepper, deseeded and finely diced (any colour will do)
- 1 clove garlic, crushed

## Method

Put the couscous into a large bowl. Mix the cumin, vegetable bouillon and boiling water together then pour the liquid over the couscous. Cover with clingfilm or a tea towel and set it aside for a few minutes. Prepare the celery, pepper, garlic and beans whilst you wait for the couscous to “cook”. Once the couscous has absorbed all the liquid, fluff it up with a fork to separate the grains, add all the other ingredients and stir to combine. Serve.

# Red Lentil and Sweet Potato Soup



(Blissful Mama)

## Ingredients

- 1 tbsp oil for frying
- 1 medium onion
- 1 medium sweet potato (peeled and cubed)
- 1 small apple (peeled and sliced)
- 1 tsp medium curry powder
- 1/2 tsp ground coriander
- 1/2 tsp ground ginger
- 500ml low salt vegetable stock
- 60g red lentils
- Small handful of fresh coriander leaves

## Method

Finely chop the onion and fry gently in a large saucepan with the curry powder.

Add the vegetable stock.

Add the remaining ingredients, bring to the boil and then simmer until the sweet potato and lentils are cooked (about 20 mins)

Blend with a stick blender

# Pumpkin Soup with Garlic and Chillies



(Hertfordshire Mummy)

I love pumpkin soup but it can be a little bit bland so I have spiced mine up with garlic, chillies and cumin.

## Ingredients:

- 2 small pumpkins (make sure these are the edible ones as some of the larger ones are grown for size rather than flavour)
- 1 diced onion
- 700 ml veg stock
- 2 cloves of garlic – crushed
- half a teaspoon of dried chillies
- pinch of cumin
- 120 ml double cream

## Method

Last time I made pumpkin soup I found the dicing and peeling really time consuming. A handy tip is to cut the pumpkins in half and roast them in the oven with a bit of olive oil first. Then you can just scoop out the flesh which makes life a lot easier.

Whilst the pumpkins are roasting you can brown off the onion in some olive oil and, as the onion is getting translucent, add the garlic in too.

Next, add the scooped out pumpkin to the onion, add the chillies and cumin and pour the stock in. Then bring to the boil, reduce and simmer for about 15-20 minutes until the pumpkin is really soft. Add the double cream and blend and the soup is ready. You can decorate it with a few roasted pumpkin seeds and a swirl of cream.

# Gardener's Pie



Blissful Mama

## Ingredients:

- 1 cup brown lentils
- 1 tbsp oil suitable for frying (eg sunflower or rapeseed - not olive oil)
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 1 clove crushed garlic
- 4-5 medium mushrooms, sliced
- 1 stick celery, sliced
- 1 carrot finely sliced
- 1/2 cup broccoli florets
- 1 cup low salt vegetable stock
- 1 tsp mixed herbs (or other herbs that you prefer - oregano is nice in this dish)
- Garlic pepper
- 3 tbsp tomato paste
- 3 cups mashed potato (optional)

## Method:

- Soak the lentils for 2 hours or overnight, drain and rinse (or prepare in advance and freeze)
- Heat oil in a large saucepan and saute onion, garlic and mushrooms for 5 minutes
- Add remaining vegetables and saute a further 5 minutes
- Add cooked lentils, seasoning, tamari, vegetable stock, herbs and tomato paste.
- Stir over heat until combined and simmer until all the vegetables are tender and the mixture is fairly thick
- Place in an ovenproof dish and top with mashed potato
- Brown in a hot oven for about 15 minutes



Alternatively, serve the mashed potato separately. Mashed potato can be substituted with sweet potato or swede if you wish.

# Glazed Ham in Ginger Beer



Rosasilium

## Ingredients

2kg Gammon  
750ml Ginger Beer  
1 large onion, peeled and halved  
For the glaze  
20 whole cloves  
1 tbsp golden syrup  
2 tsp dijon mustard  
2 tbsp demerara sugar  
1tsp ground ginger

## Method

1. In a deep saucepan place the gammon skin side down with the onion and cover with the ginger beer. Bring to the boil and then reduce to a low simmer with the lid on for about 2 hours (or adapt to the size of your joint giving an hour per kilo). Remove carefully from the pan and allow to cool a bit.
2. Preheat the oven to 240C.
3. Remove the skin with a sharp knife leaving just a thin layer of fat. Score the fat diagonally both ways to create diamonds. Poke a clove into each corner of the diamonds. Gently smooth the golden syrup over the fat without dislodging the cloves, followed by smearing the mustard over the top and finally sprinkle the sugar and ginger over evenly.
4. Roast in the oven for 10 minutes or so until the coating looks sticky and caramelised.
5. Serve with lots of roast potatoes and trimmings.

# Guacamole



Rosasilium

## Ingredients

Avocado

Lime

Garlic Puree

Salt and Pepper

Optional – Coriander, Spring Onion or Fresh Chilli (I like to very finely chop half a chilli to give a warm depth to the dip)

## Method

Cut the avocados in half and scoop out the flesh, placing in a large bowl.

Squeeze the juice of a lime in the bowl.

Using a fork, stir and lightly mash the avocado. The lime will help to soften the avocado so it shouldn't take much. Try not to over mash, there should be some small chunks in there.

Stir in a squeeze of garlic puree, salt and pepper and any optional extra.

Push the guacamole into the bottom of the bowl, scraping the edges and place the avocado stones in the dip (this will prevent it going brown) lightly cover the bowl with cling film and place in the fridge for a couple of hours.

Check seasoning, alter to taste with more lime etc. and serve with tortilla chips.

# Oven Baked Fishcakes and Potato Wedges



Utterly Scrummy

## Ingredients

- 4 potatoes, peeled
- 4 fillets of skinned and boned fish
- 1 Tblsp lemon thyme leaves
- 2 Tblsp fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 cup homemade breadcrumbs
- A little milk
- A little oil or margarine

Potato Wedges

- 4 more potatoes, unpeeled
- 1 tsp oil or melted margarine

## Method

Preheat the oven to 200°C.

Peel the potatoes, dice then cook as you would to make mash.

Whilst the potatoes are cooking put the fish onto lined baking tray and bake for 10 - 15 minutes until cooked through.

Once the potatoes are tender drain and mash with a little margarine and milk. Set aside to cool. Once the fish is cooked flake it into the cooled mashed potatoes, add the fresh herbs, season to taste and mix gently to combine all the ingredients.

Form the mixture into fishcakes then press them into the breadcrumbs and chill in the fridge to firm up while you prepare the potato wedges.

To make the wedges:

Give the potatoes a good wash then slice them into thin wedges. Put them onto a lined baking tray. Gently toss them with olive or melted margarine and bake for 15 minutes or until golden brown.

While the chips are cooking, heat a little margarine a large frying pan and cook the fishcakes over a moderate heat for about 3 - 5 minutes each side or until the outside is golden and the inside has warmed through.

# Pulled Chicken



Rosasilium

## Ingredients

1kg of chicken thighs, bones and skin removed  
100ml tomato ketchup  
3tbsp brown sugar  
2tbsp white wine vinegar  
1tbsp Hendersons Relish (or Worcestershire sauce)  
1tbsp chilli powder  
1/2 tbsp paprika  
1 garlic clove, very finely chopped  
150ml chicken stock  
generous seasoning of salt and pepper

## Method

1. Combine everything but the chicken thighs in a bowl. Stir well.
2. In a medium-sized pan place the chicken in the bottom tightly and pour the mixture over the top.
3. Bring to a simmer before reducing to the lowest possible heat you have.
4. Allow to cook for 3 hours. Once an hour stir or flip the chicken over.
5. Serve on a toasted bap.

# Slow Cooked Chilli Con Carne



Hertfordshire Mummy

For this dish I am going to use chunks of beef rather than mince as this is the traditional way it was done and the slow cooker will make it deliciously tender. The recipe I have put here is quite mild so that children can eat it too but if you want to spice things up then you might want to try a splash of some extra hot sauce

Ingredients (serves 4):

- Diced stewing beef
- 1 diced onion
- 1 can chopped tomatoes
- 1 can kidney beans (drained)
- 1/2 teaspoon dried chillies
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon sundried tomato puree

Method

As usual with slow cooking just throw all the ingredients into the pot and set on a low heat for it to be ready in approx 8 hours or a high heat to it to be ready in approx 5 hours.

# Chicken, Bacon and Spinach Pie



Rosasilium

## Ingredients

- 8 boneless chicken thighs, cut into quarters
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 8 rashers bacon, finely sliced into strips
- 1 large onion, finely diced
- 1tsp salt
- 2 tsp garlic puree
- large handful fresh thyme (don't be shy with the thyme, it brings this dish to life!)
- freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 tbsp plain flour
- 400ml chicken stock, fairly weak as the bacon will provide a lot of saltiness (I used half a Knorr Stock Pot)
- 200ml milk
- 2 large handfuls fresh spinach
- 400g puff pastry
- 1 egg, lightly beaten

## Method

1. Using a high-sided frying pan fry the chicken in half the oil until light brown. Remove and set aside.
2. Fry the onion with a little salt and the rest of the oil on a medium-low heat, stirring regularly until they are soft and translucent. Push onions to the side of the pan and add the bacon strips. Turn up the heat a little and fry until crispy.
3. Return the chicken the pan with the garlic puree and fresh thyme. Heat through for 2 minutes. Season with some freshly ground black pepper.
4. Stir through the plain flour 1 tablespoon at a time before adding the chicken stock slowly followed by the milk.
5. Turn the heat up high and bring the mixture to a boil, then reduce to a simmer for about 20 minutes.
6. The mixture should be nicely a gloopy, not too runny. Turn off the heat and fold in the spinach until it begins to wilt.
7. Pour the mixture into a pie dish and allow to cool.
8. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 200C (this is for a fan-assisted, adjust accordingly for your oven).
9. Roll out the puff pastry to the thickness of a pound coin. Carefully place over the pie dish using a rolling pin to support it (have you seen Great British Bake Off? they do it well on there).
10. Pinch the edges of the pasty into the side of the dish and then brush all over the pastry with the egg wash. Poke a small hole into the middle of the pastry.
11. Bake in the oven for 30 minutes or until the pastry top is golden and crispy.
12. Serve with mash potato and green beans.



# Vegetable Pasta Bake



Utterly Scrummy

## Ingredients

- 500g pasta
- 1 clove of garlic, crushed
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 pepper, diced
- 1 courgette, diced
- 1x 400g tin chopped tomatoes
- 1 tsp dried mixed herbs
- 1 ball mozzarella cheese

## Method

Chop all the vegetables into a 1cm dice and sauté them in a little oil until they start to soften. Add the tin of tomatoes and dried mixed herbs. Let the sauce simmer whilst you cook the pasta according to packet instructions.

Drain the pasta and mix thoroughly with the sauce before putting into an ovenproof dish. Chop or rip the mozzarella into small pieces and scatter it all over the top of the pasta. Bake at 180C for about 15 – 20 minutes.

# Chicken, Bacon and Spinach Pie



Rosasilium

## Ingredients

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- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 8 rashers bacon, finely sliced into strips
- 1 large onion, finely diced
- 1tsp salt
- 2 tsp garlic puree
- large handful fresh thyme (don't be shy with the thyme, it brings this dish to life!)
- freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 tbsp plain flour
- 400ml chicken stock, fairly weak as the bacon will provide a lot of saltiness (I used half a Knorr Stock Pot)
- 200ml milk
- 2 large handfuls fresh spinach
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- 1 egg, lightly beaten

## Method

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2. Fry the onion with a little salt and the rest of the oil on a medium-low heat, stirring regularly until they are soft and translucent. Push onions to the side of the pan and add the bacon strips. Turn up the heat a little and fry until crispy.
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10. Pinch the edges of the pasty into the side of the dish and then brush all over the pastry with the egg wash. Poke a small hole into the middle of the pastry.
11. Bake in the oven for 30 minutes or until the pastry top is golden and crispy.
12. Serve with mash potato and green beans.

# Chicken and Mushroom Orzo Pasta



Blissful Mama

## Ingredients

- 75g Orzo (or other pasta if you prefer the larger pieces)
- 1 chicken breast
- 4 or five medium sized mushrooms
- 1 tbsp creme fraiche
- 1 tsp basil pesto
- Garlic pepper to taste

## Method

Cut the chicken into pieces (of a size preferred by your child) and cook in a frying pan  
Once cooked, remove the chicken and add the mushrooms, fry gently until cooked  
In a separate pan cook the orzo (or other pasta), when cooked drain and return to the pan  
Add the rest of the ingredients and mix well.

# Cooking with Leftovers

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# Sausage, Vegetable and Pearl Barley Hotpot



## Utterly Scrummy

This recipe is also fab for using up leftover cooked sausages or cooked chicken. You could add some spinach with the sausage slices at the end and cook until the spinach wilts.

Sausage, Vegetable and Pearl Barley Hotpot - serves 5 generously.

## Ingredients

- 2 Tblsp olive oil
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 clove garlic, crushed (optional)
- 3 carrots, finely sliced
- 3 celery sticks, finely sliced
- 2 peppers, deseeded and finely diced (any colour will do)
- 1 cup pearl barley
- 750ml chicken or vegetable stock
- 400g tin chopped tomatoes
- 2 Tblsp tomato paste
- 6 good quality pork sausages

## Method

Preheat your oven to 180C/160C Fan.

Heat the oil in a deep saucepan over a moderate heat. Add the onion, garlic (if using), carrot, celery, and pepper. Cook for 5 minutes until the onion and peppers start to soften. Add the pearl barley and stir to combine. Add the stock, chopped tomatoes and tomato paste. Stir until well combined. Bring to the boil then reduce the heat to low. Cook, uncovered, for 30 - 40 minutes or until the pearl barley is tender.

Put the sausage onto a non-stick oven tray and bake for 20 – 25 minutes.

Let the sausages cool slightly then slice them thinly. Add the sliced sausages to the pearl barley mixture. Cook for a couple of minutes until the sausages are heated through. Season to taste. We stirred some spinach through ours before serving.

# Leftover Roast Lamb Shepherd's Pie



## Utterly Scrummy

This is a fab recipe for leftover roast lamb, or roast beef (just use beef stock instead of lamb stock). If I can't be bothered making mash then we serve the lamb/beef sauce over baked potatoes instead. It's a delicious, tasty and fairly low faff dish - and you can freeze the leftovers, if there are any.

## Ingredients

- 1/2 cup green lentils
- 250ml lamb stock
- 250ml water
- 400g tin chopped tomatoes
- 1 tsp soy sauce
- 1 tsp Worcester sauce
- 60ml red wine
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 stalks celery, chopped
- 2 large carrots, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- Handful or two of frozen peas
- 500g or more leftover roast lamb, chopped into smallish chunks
- 3 or 4 large floury potatoes

## Method

Grated cheese to mix in with the mash

Heat a little olive oil in a large, heavy-based saucepan over a medium heat and sweat off the onion, garlic, celery and carrot until they start to soften but not brown.

Add the tinned tomatoes, stock, water, lentils, soy sauce and Worcester sauce. Bring to the boil, then reduce heat and simmer gently for around 30 minutes. Add the red wine and simmer for a further half an hour. You should end up with a rich, flavoursome sauce without too much liquid.

Preheat oven to 180°C. Add the leftover lamb to the sauce, along with the frozen peas and let everything warm through on a low heat whilst you cook the potatoes. Peel and chop potatoes into even-sized pieces, cover with cold water and bring to the boil in a large pot. Cook the potatoes until they are tender, then drain, mash and season to taste. Mix a good handful of cheese into the mash

they are tender, then drain, mash and season to taste. Mix a good handful of cheese into the mash, beat it in with a fork so it's evenly distributed through the mash.

Spread the meat mixture in the bottom of a large casserole dish and spread the potato mash over the top. Sprinkle over some grated cheese. Put in oven and cook until the top has crisped up, browned slightly, and everything is well heated through. This usually takes about 20 minutes. Take your shepherd's pie out of the oven, let it cool for 5 minutes, and then serve it with a side salad.



# Leftover Roast Vegetables and Chorizo Frittata



Utterly Scrummy

## Ingredients

- 2 cups leftover roast vegetables, cut to 2cm dice
- 1 chorizo sausage, diced
- 1 onion, finely diced
- 8 eggs

## Method

Fry the chorizo in a large frying pan over a moderate heat so the lovely flavoured oil starts to run, saute the onion in the flavoured oil until it has softened and the chorizo is getting a little crispy. Crack the eggs into a large jug and beat well. Add the roast vegetables followed by the beaten eggs. Turn on your oven grill. Lower the heat and cook the frittata for about 5 - 10 minutes. Once the frittata is set around the edges put it in the oven under the grill until it is completely set and golden. Be careful not to burn the handle of your frying pan. Serve immediately. We'll be having ours with steamed beans and cauliflower. Leftovers are great the next day for lunches.

# Turkey Parcels



## Utterly Scrummy

Turkey is great value, really simple to cook with, high in protein, low in saturated fat and a good source of natural vitamins and minerals – and there are always leftovers!

## Ingredients

425g pack puff pastry sheets £1.25

For the fillings:

100g cooked turkey finely chopped or shredded 10p

1 - 2 Tbsp mango chutney 20p

1 tsp finely chopped chilli (optional) 10p

OR

100g cooked turkey finely chopped or shredded 1 or 2 Tbsp cream cheese 20p sprinkling of dried mixed herbs 5p 2 - 3 Tbsp dried cranberries or a dollop of cranberry sauce 40p

## Method

Preheat your oven to Gas Mark 6/200C/Fan 180C. Unroll the 2 sheets of pastry and cut each one into 3, to get 6 rectangles from two sheets of pastry.

Spread either mango chutney or cream cheese onto the pastry strip, leaving a border of about 1cm all the way around. Sprinkle over some of the dried herbs or chilli then pile a tablespoon of the rest of your chosen filling mixture on one end.

Fold the pastry over then crimp with a fork to seal it well. Don't forget to make a couple of small holes in the top of each pastry parcel with a fork or knife to allow steam to escape during cooking.

Put on a lined baking tray and bake in a preheated oven at Gas Mark 6/200C/Fan 180C for 20 minutes. Best served warm from the oven.

# Onion Bahji/Spanish Tortilla



## Rosasilium

I had a large bowl of sliced onions mixed with spices and gram flour sat in my fridge. Not wanting this to go to waste I had an epiphany when staring vacantly into my open fridge I noticed we had an inordinate amount of eggs that needed using up. Spanish Tortilla/Omelettes are two of my favourite things, so why not marry the two together?

## Ingredients

- 2 large onions, sliced
- 3 average sized potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 4 or 5 eggs
- Knob of softened butter
- Splash of milk
- 4 tbsp Gram Flour
- Ground Coriander
- Ground Ginger
- Ground Cumin
- Tumeric
- Chilli Powder
- Splash of water
- Drizzle of oil

## Method

1. In a bowl, mix together the sliced onions, gram flour and spices with a splash of water.
2. In a large frying pan heat some oil on a medium heat and the slowly cook the onions. Keep turning occasionally to help them cook through, but try not to brown them too much. Sprinkle them with some salt.
3. After about 15 minutes or so place onion mixture in oven dish, cover with foil and place in pre-heated oven at 170C.
4. Whisk eggs, add milk and butter and blend well. Set aside.
5. Boil the potatoes cube in a small pan for 5 minutes, drain

5. Boil the potatoes cube in a small pan for 5 minutes, drain.
6. Remove onions from oven.
7. Line baking tray or oven dish with baking paper. Add the onion mix and potatoes followed by the egg mixture. Using a spoon gently cajole the mixture so that all of the ingredients are covered in egg.
8. Cover with foil and place in oven for about half an hour.
9. Remove foil and bake for another 5-10 minutes, depending on how brown you want to top to be.
10. Eat and enjoy. We had ours with leftover curry, but this would also work well with a nice salad, picnic or offering at a Potluck party.

# Quick and Easy Desserts

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# Cheat's Rice Pudding



Blissful Mama

I did have proper pudding rice, and all the ingredients to make a proper bake in the oven rice pudding, but I didn't have 3 hours to spare. Instead I did all in a pan in less than 30 minutes and it tasted delicious.

## Ingredients

- 3/4 cup pudding rice
- boiling water
- 1 cup milk
- 1 tsp butter
- 3/4 cup currants or raisins
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg
- generous splash of maple syrup

## Method

- Boil the kettle while measuring the rice
- Pour boiling water onto the rice and cook for about 15 minutes (until just cooked)
- Drain all the water from the rice and return it to the pan
- Add the milk and bring back to the boil then turn down the heat to a simmer
- Add butter fruit and spices and maple syrup, mix well and heat through.
- Serve when all liquid has absorbed (for me this was pretty much straight away!)

# Bread and Butter Pudding



## Hertfordshire Mummy

Here's a thrifty but delicious recipe for those of you who have extra bread or crusts to use up. I was inspired to do this as I make my children's packed lunch sandwiches in advance and freeze them. Unfortunately they demand that the crusts be cut off so I end up with a loaf's worth of crusts left over!

Bread pudding is a great solution. It's easy to make and uses cheap store cupboard ingredients that you probably have around the house. It is also delicious cold as well as hot so good for picnics or packed lunches.

## Ingredients:

- 500g bread/crusts
- a handful of raisins or currants (or any dried fruit that you have lying around!)
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- 600 ml milk
- 2 eggs
- 140g soft brown sugar
- 100g melted butter

## Method

Tear the bread into a bowl and add all of the ingredients reserving a little bit of the sugar. Stir with a spoon until it's all mushed up (great fun for the kids) and leave for 15 minutes for the milk to soak in to the bread.

Butter a cake tin or square baking dish and pour in the mixture- sprinkle some of the sugar over the top. Bake in the oven for 1 1/2 hours at around 180c. If the top starts to get too brown, cover with foil.

When it's ready, take it out and cut into squares - eat hot or cold.  
Quick and Easy Desserts



# Quick and Easy Peach and Raspberry Tart



## Utterly Scrummy

I do love recipes that look like you've slaved for ages when in reality they are really easy to make. This is SO easy and quick to make, you'll have a delicious and impressive snack ready in no time.

## Ingredients

- 60g ground almonds
  - 1 tsp vanilla extract
  - 1 Tblsp white sugar
  - 1 free range egg, separated
  - 1 sheet pre-rolled frozen puff pastry, partially thawed
  - 2 large peaches
  - 150g raspberries (we picked ours fresh from our back garden)
- Preheat oven to 220°C/200°C fan-forced. Grease a large baking tray. Line with baking paper.

## Method

Combine the ground almonds, vanilla extract, egg white and sugar to form a paste. Halve the peaches, remove the stones and slice into thin slices.

Put the pastry sheet on the prepared baking tray and score a border about 2cm in from the edge then prick it all over with a fork.

Spread the almond mixture over the pastry within the scored area. Top with the peach slices and raspberries.

Brush the pastry border lightly with egg yolk then bake for 20 to 25 minutes or until the pastry is golden and puffed up and the peaches are tender. Serve warm or cold. It is delicious served on its own or with ice-cream or cream.

# Weekend Lunches

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## Fish Cakes

### Ingredients

- 1 can tuna or salmon in spring water, drained
- 3 medium potatoes, cooked and mashed
- 1 tsp grated lemon zest
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 1 spring onion, white and green parts very finely chopped
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1 tbsp oil

### Method

Mix together all the ingredients except the oil. Spread a little flour on a board, tip the mixture out, shape into a rectangle and cut into eight pieces. Shape each piece into round, flat patties. Heat the oil in a frying pan. Brown the fishcakes on both sides and serve with a salad or steamed mixed vegetables.

## Our Favourite Homemade Pizza Dough

My kids love making their own pizzas and we can vary the toppings according to taste, and what we have available. This dough takes no time at all to whip up in a mixer, or get the kids to knead it for you. You can use leftovers to make calzone with the dough, just roll out as if you are making pizza, put the filling on one side then fold over and crimp closed. Perfect for a Friday night dinner or weekend lunch, great if you have friends over after school too.

### Ingredients

- 1 cup plain flour plus extra for kneading
- 1/2 cup wholemeal flour
- 1 sachet dried yeast
- pinch of salt
- 1/2 teaspoon dried mixed herbs
- about 2/3 cup lukewarm water

### Method

Place flours in a large bowl with yeast, salt and dried herbs. Make a well in the centre. Use a bread and butter knife or wooden spoon to mix in just enough water to bind the mixture and form a dough. Turn the dough onto a lightly floured surface. Knead for 5 minutes to form a smooth (not sticky) ball of dough. Use a little extra flour if you need to.

Spray a bowl and cling film with a little oil spray. Put the dough in the bowl and cover with the cling film. Set aside in a warm, draft-free place to rise for about 30 minutes while you prepare the toppings.

We use a variety of toppings depending on what is available. Favourites in our house include: pepper, mushroom, and courgette with a tomato paste base.

Check the dough has risen – when a finger is gently pressed into the dough it will spring back a little bit.

Once the dough has risen, use your fist to punch down the dough gently. Turn the dough out on to a lightly floured surface. Knead the dough until it's smooth.

Prepare the dough for your favourite toppings. Roll the dough out to make 1 large pizza, or 4 smaller pizzas.`

# Snacks and Treats

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## Pikelets/Pancakes

### Ingredients

300g self raising flour, or plain flour with 4 tsp baking powder added  
2 eggs  
50g sugar  
375ml milk

### Method

Mix all the ingredients together well and then cook ladlefuls of mixture in a greased frying pan over a moderate heat. Serve with chopped bananas and drizzle with golden syrup, spread with jam or brushed with lemon juice and sprinkled with sugar.

## Homemade Muesli Bars

### Ingredients

1 x 397g tin of condensed milk  
500g muesli or 250g rolled oats, 200g mixed seeds, 50g chopped almonds  
100g sultanas or dried apricots

### Method

Preheat your oven to 130C/Gas Mark 1/2 and lightly oil a large baking tin. Mine measures 23cm x 33cm x 4cm.

Mix the dry ingredients and fruit together until well combined. Warm the condensed milk in a pan then mix with all the other ingredients and use a spatula to make sure everything is well coated.

Press the mixture into the tin and level the surface. The mixture is really sticky so you might want to wet your hands or lightly oil them so that you don't end up a sticky mess.

Bake the muesli bars for 1 hour then set aside for 15 minutes to cool slightly. Cut into bars and store in an airtight container.

## Carrot Cake

### Ingredients

2 eggs  
125ml oil  
1 cup brown sugar  
2 teaspoons cinnamon  
2 cups grated carrot  
4 tsp grated lemon zest

1 tsp grated lemon zest  
½ tsp baking soda  
1 cup white flour  
1 cup wholemeal flour  
2 tsp baking powder

## Method

Preheat your oven to 180°C. Grease a 20cm cake tin or line it with non-stick baking paper. Beat eggs, oil and brown sugar until thick and smooth. Add the cinnamon, lemon zest and grated carrot. Mix well to combine. Add the sifted flour, baking powder and baking soda and gently but thoroughly mix once again until combined. Pour mixture into the cake tin. Bake at 180°C for 40 - 45 minutes, or until the centre is firm and a skewer inserted in to the centre comes out clean. Leave to stand for 5 minutes in the tin. Cool on a cake rack. Dust with icing sugar.

# Rice Pudding (Lunchbox treat or pudding)

## Ingredients

600ml whole milk  
65g long grain white rice  
pinch of salt  
50g white sugar  
1 tsp vanilla extract  
1/2 tsp ground cinnamon

## Method

In a medium sized, heavy bottomed saucepan combine the milk and rice with a pinch of salt. Place saucepan over a fairly high heat and bring to a boil. Once boiling, reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer until the rice is tender. This usually takes about 25 minutes. Stir the milk mixture frequently using a heatproof rubber spatula or wooden spoon to stop the rice from sticking to the bottom of the saucepan.

When the rice is tender (al dente) take the saucepan off the heat and add sugar, vanilla extract, and ground cinnamon. Mix well to combine. Return the saucepan to the heat and cook until the rice pudding thickens, this should take about 5 - 10 minutes. Remove from heat and add the sultanas if you are using them. Spoon the pudding into a bowl to cool and cover with clingfilm to stop a skin forming. Store in the fridge for up to 3 days. To make this into more of a Mullerice type treat add some jam or golden syrup to swirl through the rice pudding. You could also add dried apricots or dates instead of sultanas if you have some in your store cupboard.

# The Low Faff Meal Plan

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If you haven't done a meal plan before but are thinking about it, then here's a sample one from Michelle at Utterly Scrummy.

This meal plan is for those weeks when things are manic, families with little time to prepare meals or just when you need a bit of convenience. The meals are tasty and low faff to make.

## Sunday Afternoon - Slow Cooker Vegetable Stew (Monday's Dinner)

### Ingredients

- 2 onions, thinly sliced
- 4 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 pepper, diced
- 1 tbsp oil
- 2 tsp cumin
- 2 x 400g tins chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 2 x 400g tins chopped tomatoes
- 500ml tomato passata
- 2 handfuls of sliced mushrooms
- 1 large carrot, peeled and finely sliced
- 1 small sweet potato, cut into small dice
- 2 tsp dried oregano
- 250ml red wine
- 500ml vegetable stock

### Method

Soften the onions, pepper and garlic in a little oil then stir in the cumin and cook for about a minute until fragrant. Put in the slow cooker with all the other ingredients. Stir well. Cook on low for 3 hours. Season to taste before serving with crusty bread.

## Tuesday – Rice and Vegetable Slice

### Ingredients

- 1 cup cooked white or brown rice
- 2 onions, finely sliced
- Handful of mushrooms, finely sliced
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 300g spinach
- 6 large eggs, beaten
- Salt and pepper to season

- 2 large tomatoes, sliced
- 1 cup grated cheese

## Method

Preheat your oven to 180°C. Lightly oil a large baking/casserole dish or line it with non-stick baking paper. If you haven't cooked the rice, then cook following the instructions on the packet. Cook onions and mushrooms in the oil until softened. Steam fresh spinach on high in a microwave for 2 minutes, squeeze out as much moisture as you can then chop finely. Combine all half the cheese, all the vegetables and rice with the beaten egg, except the sliced tomatoes. Season with salt and pepper. Spoon into the prepared dish and flatten the top. Put the tomato slices on the top and then sprinkle with the leftover grated cheese. Bake for about 35-40 minutes or until set in the middle and lightly browned. Serve with chutney/relish and steamed mixed vegetables or salad.

# Wednesday - Slow Cooker Meatballs

## Ingredients

- 500g beef mince
- ½ cup uncooked long-grain rice
- ¼ cup chopped fresh herbs (parsley, chives, oregano, marjoram, etc.)
- 1 large onion, finely diced
- 1 pepper, finely diced
- 2 carrots, finely diced
- 1 stick celery, finely sliced/diced
- 500g homemade or store bought pasta sauce
- 375 ml beef stock or water

## Method

Turn the slow cooker on to low to preheat whilst you chop all the vegetables. In a bowl, mix together the mince, rice and fresh herbs with a good seasoning of salt and pepper. Roll tablespoonfuls into balls and set aside for a few minutes. Put the onion, pepper, carrot and celery into the slow cooker. Mix together the cook-homemade pasta sauce and beef stock then pour into the slow cooker. Stir to mix thoroughly with the vegetables. Put the meatballs on top of the sauce in the slow cooker and then cover with the lid. Cook on low for 6-7 hours or on high for 3-4 hours. Serve with mash/pasta/baked potatoes and steamed mixed vegetables.

# Thursday - Quick Weeknight Vegetable Curry

Cooked rice, to serve

## Ingredients

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 1 pepper, finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 1 tsp ground cumin

1 tsp ground cumin  
1 tsp ground turmeric  
300g pumpkin or butternut squash, cut into 1 inch dice  
2 large potatoes, peeled and diced (same as the pumpkin)  
400g can chopped tomatoes  
400g can lentils, drained

## Method

Heat oil in a large frying pan. Soften the onion and pepper in the oil and then add the garlic, cook for a couple of minutes. Add the cumin and turmeric, cook them for about a minute or until they are fragrant. Add the pumpkin, potatoes and chopped tomatoes to the pan and mix everything together well. Cover and simmer for 10 minutes then add the lentils and cook for a further 5 minutes until the pumpkin and potato are cooked. Serve with rice.

# Friday - Slow Cooker Beef Casserole

## Ingredients

750g casserole beef  
1 large onion, diced  
2 cloves garlic, crushed  
2 peppers, diced  
2 tbsp plain flour  
2 tbsp tomato paste  
250ml beef stock  
400g tin diced tomatoes  
1 tbsp dried oregano  
400g can cannellini beans, well drained

## Method

Cut beef into 2.5cm-3cm pieces and season the beef with salt and pepper. Brown the meat in a frying pan over a high heat and transfer to a slow cooker.

Put the onion, garlic and pepper in the slow cooker as well. Stir the flour, tomato paste and beef stock together to make a smooth paste and pour over the beef. Add the tin of tomatoes and oregano then cover.

Cook on low for 6-8 hours or high for 3-5 hours. Add the cannellini beans, stir to mix through and then heat for another 20 minutes or so before serving.

# Saturday - Quesadillas

## Ingredients

8 tortillas, wholemeal wraps or burritos

1 tin whole kernel corn  
1 tin chilli beans  
1 cup grated cheese  
2 fresh tomatoes, roughly chopped  
1 spring onion, white and green parts chopped



A couple of large handfuls of grated cheese

## Method

Preheat a non-stick frying pan or sandwich press. Top four of the tortillas with the chilli beans, drained sweetcorn, chopped tomatoes, spring onion and grated cheese.

Cover with remaining tortillas to make a tortilla sandwiches.

Spray frying pan with a little oil. Cook tortillas one at a time in frying pan. Cook on one side for 2 or 3 minutes, then turn and cook the other side for another 2 or 3 minutes or until the fillings are hot and the cheese has melted. Repeat with the other three tortillas. Allow to cool for a few minutes. Serve with salad.

# Sunday - Chicken Casserole

## Ingredients

- 8 chicken pieces
- 2 onions, diced
- 2 cloves of garlic, crushed
- 4 carrots, cut into chunks
- 2 celery sticks, sliced
- 375ml water
- 1 chicken stock cube
- 1 teaspoon mixed herbs (1 Tblsp chopped fresh rosemary)
- 1-2 Tblsp cornflour to thicken, dissolved in 50ml water

## Method

Put the vegetables and chicken pieces into a casserole dish. Pour over the chicken stock. Sprinkle over the herbs. Cover and bake in the oven at 180°C for 1 ½ hours until the chicken is cooked. If it is necessary, thicken the casserole by using the cornflour dissolved in water. Serve with mash and steamed greens.