

Antipasto Avocados

Halved **avocados** provide the basis for delicious and nutritious quick snacks or light meals. To prevent browning, immediately sprinkle avocado halves with lemon or lime juice.

Semi-dried Tomato Avocados:
Arrange 4 **semi-dried tomatoes** in pip cavity of each **avocado**. Top with thin slices **feta cheese**, halved **pitted olives** and fresh **basil leaves**. Combine juice of half **lemon** with 2 tablespoons **extra virgin olive oil** and cracked **black pepper** in screw topped jar and shake until combined. Drizzle over avocados and serve at once.

TIP For best flavour and texture, cook green vegetables like beans, asparagus and broccoli only until bright green and just tender. Cook in steamer or steamer insert, or cover and cook on high in a microwave oven.

Chilli Prawn Avocados:

Heat frypan over high heat. Add 2 tablespoons **peanut oil** and 2 finely sliced **spring onions**, 1 finely sliced **chilli** and 12 shelled and de-veined **green prawns**. Cook, shaking pan over heat, until prawns change colour (do not overcook or they will become rubbery). Remove from heat and drizzle over 1 teaspoon **honey**, 1 teaspoon **sesame oil** and juice of 1/2 **lime** or **lemon**. Spoon prawns into **avocado** shells, top with **coriander leaves** and serve at once.

Steamed Spring Vegetables With Honey Soy Dressed Seafood

Prepare *Honey Soy Dressing* (see below). Arrange 2 halved **baby bok choy** in steamer basket. Add fillets or steaks of your favourite **firm fleshed fish** (such as Sea Perch or Rockling or Atlantic Salmon) and arrange thin strips of **red capsicum** on top. Arrange thickly sliced **zucchini**, quartered **button squash** and topped and tailed **green beans** around fish. Steam until vegetables are brightly coloured and fish is cooked through, 12-15 minutes. Serve drizzled with the *Honey Soy Dressing* with **lemon** or **lime wedges**.

Honey Soy Dressing

Combine:

1 tablespoon **honey**,
2 tablespoons **white wine vinegar**,
2 tablespoons **light soy sauce**,
1 finely chopped **garlic clove**,
1 tablespoon **peanut oil**
(or **grapeseed oil** or **canola oil**) and
1 teaspoon **sesame oil**.

New Potato and Green Bean Salad

Steam 4 new **potatoes** until tender, about 20 minutes, adding 250g topped and tailed **green beans** to steamer after 10 minutes. Remove from heat and arrange in serving bowl. Cut 4 slices **prosciutto** into strips. Heat frypan over medium-high heat. Add prosciutto and shake pan over heat until prosciutto is golden brown and crispy. Scatter over potatoes and beans. Prepare *Honey Mustard Vinaigrette*, drizzle over salad and serve at once.

Honey Mustard Vinaigrette

Using fork or whisk combine in small bowl: 2 teaspoons **honey**, 1 teaspoon **wholegrain mustard**, 2 finely chopped **garlic cloves**, 1/4 cup **white wine vinegar**, 2 tablespoons **olive oil** and coarsely ground **black pepper** to taste.

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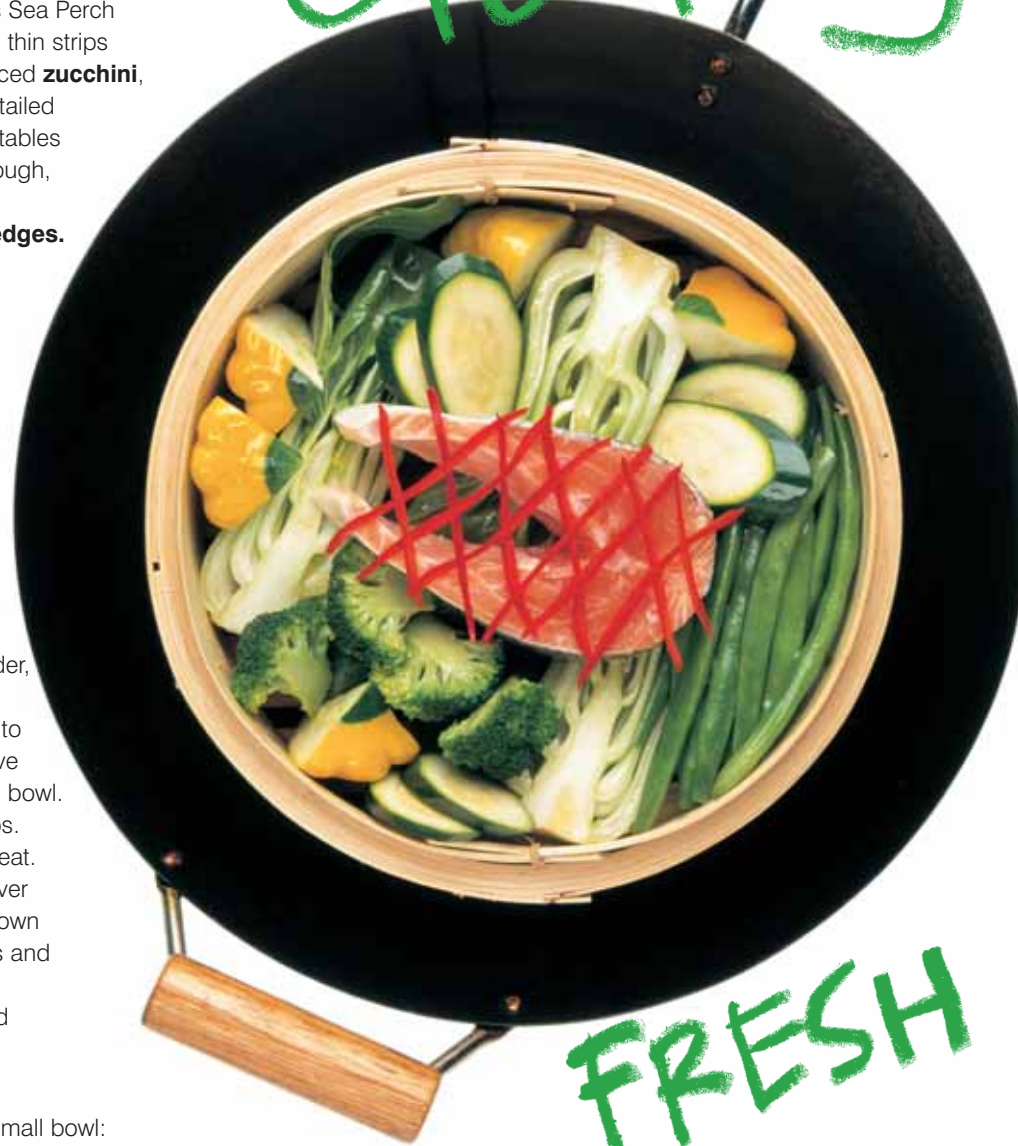
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Orange and Red Onion Avocados:

Put small **lettuce leaf** in hollow of each **avocado** (try using **radicchio**, which is a rich crimson colour and has a lovely bitter edge). Arrange thin slices of peeled **orange** in lettuce, then top with finely sliced **red onion** and small **mint leaves**. Combine **juice of 1/2 orange** with 2 tablespoons **extra virgin olive oil** and cracked **black pepper** in screw topped jar and shake until combined. Drizzle over avocados and serve at once.

Caramelised Pineapple with Bananas and Butterscotch Macadamias

(Serves 6)

Heat 2 tablespoons **unsalted butter** in large frypan. Add 1/2 cup **brown sugar** and stir over medium heat until sugar dissolves. Remove skin from 1/2 **pineapple** and cut into 1cm rounds. Add to pan and cook over low-medium heat 5 minutes, turning halfway through cooking time. Remove pineapple, draining excess juices back into pan. Arrange pineapple on platter with 3 freshly sliced **bananas**, 1 punnet **strawberries** and **mint leaves**. Return pan to stove and add 1 cup **macadamias**. Shake pan over medium heat until coated with mixture. Scatter over fruit on platter.



Strawberry Gelato

(Serves 8)
Remove leaves from 3 punnets **strawberries**, cut in half and combine with 3/4 cup **castor sugar**. Set aside 10 minutes (see tip). Blend with 500g **peeled watermelon** until smooth. Pour into freezer container or lunchbox and freeze 6 hours. Turn out of container and, using a large knife, cut into slices or spears. Serve as a snack or as a dessert with sliced **watermelon**, **fresh strawberries** and **mint**.

Avocado Pine Gelato

(Serves 8)
Even though we mostly eat **avocados** as a vegetable, they are actually a fruit - so they make luscious desserts like this one. Using a large knife, cut 1 **pineapple** in half, then into thick slices. Using a small knife, remove skin and tough centre. Cut pineapple into chunks and combine with 3/4 cup **castor sugar**. Set aside 10 minutes (see tip). Remove skin and pips from 2 **avocados** and blend with prepared pineapple and 2 teaspoons **vanilla essence** until smooth. Pour into freezer container or lunchbox and freeze 6 hours, then turn out, slice and serve with thinly sliced **pineapple** and **mint leaves**.

TIP Combining fruit with sugar - and letting it stand 10 minutes - allows juices to be given off, thus making blending easier.

Pineapple Coconut Gelato

(Serves 8)
Using a large sharp knife, cut 1 **pineapple** in half, then into thick slices. Using a small knife, remove skin and tough centre. Cut pineapple into chunks and combine with 3/4 cup **castor sugar**. Set aside 10 minutes (see Tip). Blend with 1 teaspoon **rum essence** and 220ml **coconut milk**. Pour into freezer container or lunchbox and freeze 6 hours. Turn out, slice and serve with **thinly sliced pineapple**.

Spring Garden Salad with Tuna

Arrange in large salad bowl: washed and dried leaves of 1/2 **Iceberg lettuce**, 2 thickly sliced **tomatoes**, 2 sliced **Lebanese cucumbers**, 1 sliced **stick celery**, 1 sliced **avocado**, 425g can **chunk-style tuna**, drained, 1/2 **red Spanish onion**, sliced. Drizzle with *Zesty Lemon Dressing*, toss and serve, scattered with **black olives**.

Zesty Lemon & Olive Oil Dressing

Gently heat 1/3 cup **extra virgin olive oil** with 2 teaspoons grated **lemon zest** 2-3 minutes. Remove from heat and stand 10 minutes. Strain oil through a fine strainer, then whisk with 1/4 cup **white wine vinegar** and a little **pepper**.



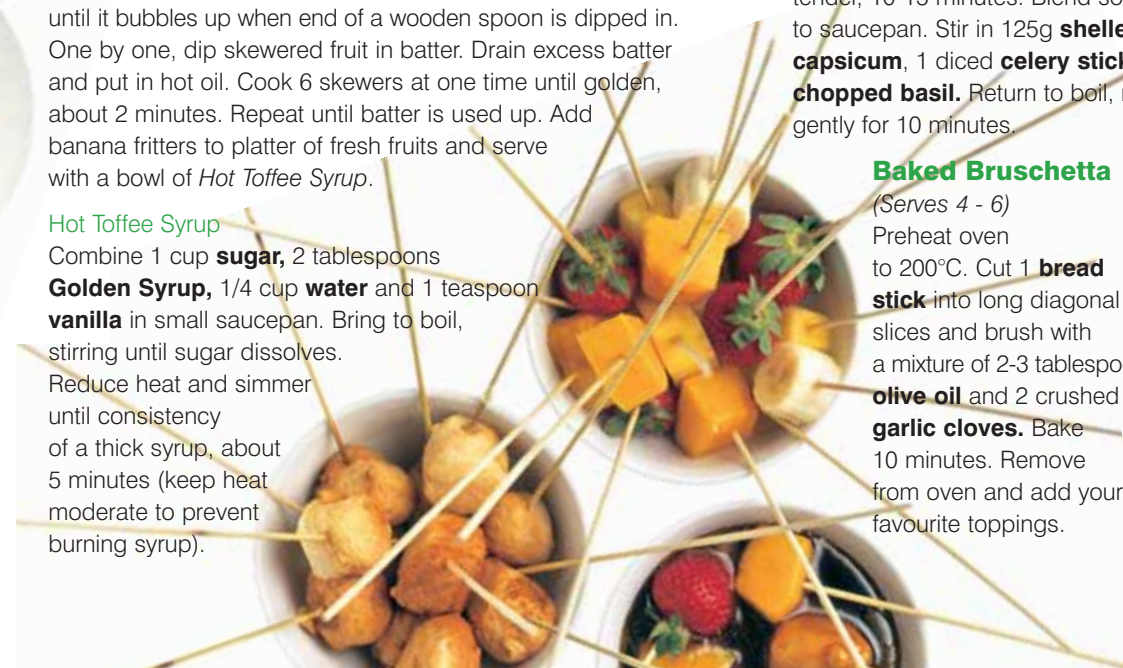
Banana Fritter Dippers with Hot Toffee Syrup

Make fritter batter, by combining 1/2 cup **SR flour** with 1 **egg** and 1/2 cup **water** and set aside. Meanwhile, make *Hot Toffee Syrup* (see below) and set aside. Cut 1/4 **pineapple** and 6 **bananas** into 2cm chunks. Remove leaves from 1 punnet **strawberries**. Remove skin and pips from 1/4 **pawpaw** and cut flesh into 2cm chunks. Place fruits on ends of bamboo skewers and arrange on serving platter. Set aside 20 banana skewers for the fritters.

Heat 2 cups **grapeseed oil** (or **canola oil**) in a small saucepan until it bubbles up when end of a wooden spoon is dipped in. One by one, dip skewered fruit in batter. Drain excess batter and put in hot oil. Cook 6 skewers at one time until golden, about 2 minutes. Repeat until batter is used up. Add banana fritters to platter of fresh fruits and serve with a bowl of *Hot Toffee Syrup*.

Hot Toffee Syrup

Combine 1 cup **sugar**, 2 tablespoons **Golden Syrup**, 1/4 cup **water** and 1 teaspoon **vanilla** in small saucepan. Bring to boil, stirring until sugar dissolves. Reduce heat and simmer until consistency of a thick syrup, about 5 minutes (keep heat moderate to prevent burning syrup).



Healthy Smoothies

(2 large serves)
Simply blend the following mixtures until smooth and creamy and drink at once.

Banana Caramel Smoothie:

1 thickly sliced **banana**, 2-3 teaspoon **light brown sugar** or **golden syrup**, 1 cup **vanilla reduced fat yoghurt**, 1 cup **low-fat milk** or **soy milk**.

Strawberry Yoghurt Smoothie:

1/2 punnet **strawberries**, 1-2 teaspoons **honey** or **sugar**, 1 cup **strawberry reduced fat yoghurt**, 1 cup **low-fat milk**.



Pawpaw Orange Smoothie:

1/4 **small pawpaw** (skin and pips removed), 2-3 teaspoons **honey**, 1 cup **peach** or **mango reduced fat yoghurt**, 1 cup **freshly squeezed orange juice**.

Spring Carrot Soup

Heat 1 tablespoon **olive oil** in large saucepan and stir-fry 1 chopped **onion** and 3 chopped **carrots** for 2 minutes. Reduce heat, cover and cook over low heat 10 minutes. Stir in 3 cups **vegetable stock**, cover and cook until carrots are tender, 10-15 minutes. Blend soup until smooth and return to saucepan. Stir in 125g **shelled peas**, 1 finely diced **capsicum**, 1 diced **celery stick** and 2 tablespoons **chopped basil**. Return to boil, reduce heat and cook gently for 10 minutes.

Baked Bruschetta

(Serves 4 - 6)
Preheat oven to 200°C. Cut 1 **bread stick** into long diagonal slices and brush with a mixture of 2-3 tablespoons **olive oil** and 2 crushed **garlic cloves**. Bake 10 minutes. Remove from oven and add your favourite toppings.



TIP To prepare asparagus, wash, then snap 5-6 cm coarse ends off. Arrange in steamer basket and cook until asparagus turns vibrant green, 3-4 minutes. Serve at once with dressing of your choice

Asparagus & Chicken Salad

(Serves 4)
Preheat grill. Meanwhile, heat frypan over medium-high heat, add 1 tablespoon **olive oil** and lightly brown 2 lean **skinless chicken breasts**. Combine 1 tablespoon olive oil with 2 teaspoons **honey** and brush mixture over chicken. Grill until golden on both sides and cooked through. Set aside while you prepare *Quick Asparagus* (see tip). Cut 1/2 **red** and 1/2 **green** or **yellow capsicum** into thin strips. Slice chicken thickly and arrange on serving platter with asparagus and capsicum strips. Drizzle with *Lemony Mayonnaise*.

Lemony Mayonnaise

Combine 1/2 cup **mayonnaise** with 1/2 cup **non fat plain yoghurt** and the finely grated zest of 1/2 - 1 **lemon**.

TIP Combining your favourite mayonnaise with non-fat yoghurt is the best of both worlds - you get the distinctive flavour of mayonnaise, but with much less fat.



Easy Marinated Artichoke Hearts

Bring 3 litres **water** to boil. Add juice of 2 **lemons**. Wash 5 globe **artichokes** and trim stalks back to 5-6 cm. Pull off all tough outer leaves until you reach tender inside 'heart'. Using a large sharp stainless steel knife, cut off top thirds of artichokes, then cut artichoke hearts in half lengthways. Add to boiling water and cook until tender, 15-20 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, remove artichokes and arrange in serving dish. Combine 3 tablespoons **olive oil**, 3 crushed **garlic cloves** and a pinch of **salt**. Drizzle mixture over warm artichokes and dust with ground **black pepper**.