

Corn and Tomato Soup

Delicious and chunky, this soup can be enjoyed as a main meal.

- 2 rashers bacon
 - 1 small onion, finely chopped
 - 3 garlic cloves, crushed
 - 1/2 cup diced red capsicum
 - 1/2 cup diced green capsicum
 - 4 Roma tomatoes, finely chopped
 - 3 cups low salt chicken stock
 - 2 cups corn kernels
 - Salt and pepper to taste
 - 2 spring onions, white part only, sliced
- Serves 6**

Slice bacon into thin strips and put into a pan over medium heat and cook 5 minutes. Add onion and garlic and cook gently 3 minutes. Add capsicum and tomatoes with stock and simmer 10 minutes. Stir in corn and simmer a further 10 minutes. Add salt and pepper to taste. Serve garnished with spring onion.

Potato and Pea Salad

The refreshing taste of mint tossed with peas and mustardy potatoes makes a fantastic salad which can be served hot or cold.

- 1.5kg cocktail potatoes, scrubbed
 - 2 cups fresh shelled peas
 - 1/3 cup light olive oil
 - 1/3 cup light mayonnaise
 - 1/3 cup fresh lemon juice
 - 1 tablespoon whole grain mustard
 - 1/2 teaspoon salt
 - 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
 - 1 cup fresh mint leaves, finely shredded
- Serves 6**

Boil potatoes in a large pot and when almost cooked add peas. Cook at a lively boil for 3 min. Drain in a colander and gently refresh under cold water. Whisk oil, mayonnaise, lemon juice, mustard, salt and pepper together until well combined. Stir in mint and pour over vegetables and toss.

Rhubarb, Strawberry and Apple Nut Crumble

Apple and strawberries are the secret ingredients in this fabulous rhubarb crumble.

- 5 cups chopped rhubarb
 - 3 small Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored and coarsely grated
 - 1 punnet small strawberries, hulled
 - 1/2 cup caster sugar
 - 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- Crumble:**
- 1/2 cup plain flour
 - 30g butter
 - 1/2 cup soft brown sugar
 - 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
 - 1/2 cup coarsely chopped macadamias
- Serves 6**

Preheat oven to moderate.

In a large bowl combine rhubarb, apples, strawberries, sugar and cinnamon.

Toss well and tip into a deep baking dish.

To make crumble, combine flour, butter, brown sugar, cinnamon and macadamias and rub together with your fingers until combined. Spread mixture over top of fruit and bake for 25–30 min or until fruit is soft and bubbling and top is golden and crunchy. Serve with cream.

Free-form Veggie Pie

There's nothing difficult about this wrapped pie. Add chopped fresh herbs for extra flavour.

- 2 sheets puff pastry
 - 1 1/2 cups diced cooked potato
 - 1 medium carrot, coarsely grated
 - 1 small onion, finely chopped
 - 1 stick celery, finely chopped
 - 2 cups broccoli florets
 - 1 cup peas
 - 2 teaspoons curry powder (optional)
 - 1 egg yolk, beaten
 - Poppy seeds for decoration
- Serves 6**

Preheat oven to hot.

Cut two circles of pastry the size of a dinner plate and place one on a lightly greased oven tray. Combine potato, carrot, onion, celery, broccoli, peas and curry powder (if using). Spoon mixture onto pastry leaving a 2.5cm border. Moisten border with water and place remaining pastry circle on top, firmly pressing edges together to seal.

Brush top with egg yolk and sprinkle with poppy seeds.

Pierce top of pie with a skewer to allow steam to escape, otherwise pastry will not crisp. Bake about 40 min or until crisp and golden.

Recipes by Kate McGhie

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Steamed Fish with Zucchini Ribbon Salad

8 truss cherry tomatoes
2 large zucchini
12 asparagus spears
1/2 cup coarsely chopped parsley
Juice 1 lemon
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
Salt and freshly ground pepper
4 thick fillets white fish
Coriander for garnishing
Serves 4

A light and garden fresh dish to soothe and satisfy

Preheat oven to moderate. Place truss tomatoes in a baking pan and brush with a little olive oil. Cook for 5–10 min or until slightly wilted and split. Remove from oven. Trim zucchini and using a vegetable peeler, shave ribbons lengthways until you reach the seeds. Discard seed section. Snap woody stalks off ends of asparagus and halve spears. Drop zucchini and asparagus into a pan of simmering salted water for 1-2 min. Drain and plunge into cold water. When cool, drain and toss with parsley, lemon juice and olive oil. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Arrange fish in a steamer and cook 5–8 min or until flesh easily separates when probed with the point of a knife. Serve on top of zucchini and asparagus salad with roasted tomatoes and a wedge of lemon on the side. Garnish with coriander. Drizzle with extra olive oil if desired.

Grilled Spicy Buttered Corn

Corn becomes extra special when cooked this way. Great as a meal starter or to serve at a barbecue.

90g butter, softened
1 tablespoon finely grated fresh ginger
2 teaspoons finely chopped red chilli
1/3 cup finely shredded coriander
1 tablespoon chopped mint
2 teaspoons finely grated lemon zest
1 teaspoon coarsely crushed peppercorns
6 corn cobs
Serves 6

Blend butter with ginger, chilli, coriander, mint, zest and peppercorns. Refrigerate. Soak whole cobs in water for 10 min then remove silky tassels. Gently pull husks away from cobs and slather with the spicy butter. Press husks back in place and grill or barbecue until charred.



Frozen Fruit Cream

Nothing could be easier than combining ice cream with seasonal berries and tropical fruit and freezing. And nothing could be yummiier to eat.

1 litre vanilla low fat ice cream
500ml vanilla or honey flavoured low fat yoghurt
3 cups roughly chopped mixed berries
1/3 cup fresh passion fruit pulp
1/2 cup chopped mango
few extra berries for decoration
fresh mint leaves
Serves 6

Leave the ice cream at room temperature to soften slightly. Gently fold the yoghurt, berries, passion fruit and mango through, keeping a few aside for decoration. Quickly spoon the mixture into a plastic wrap lined mould and freeze. To serve, quickly dip mould in and out of hot water and turn out onto a plate. Decorate with berries and mint leaves.



Pears with Pecan Crumble

Individual pear crumbles are perfect as a family treat or to impress friends.

4 medium pears
2 tablespoons soft brown sugar
100g gingernut biscuits (or Marie), coarsely crushed
1/2 cup plain flour
extra 1/2 cup soft brown sugar
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
4 tablespoons unsalted chilled butter, diced
80g chopped pecans
Serves 8

Preheat oven to hot. Halve pears and scoop out cores. Combine sugar, biscuit crumbs, flour, cinnamon, butter and pecans. Spoon the mixture into hollows of pears pushing down lightly. Arrange pears in a lightly greased ovenproof dish and bake 30 min or until tops are crisped and browned. Serve with creamy low fat yoghurt or ice cream.



Potato and Leeks

The best potato varieties for salad include Pink Fir Apple, Kipfler, Bintje, Desiree, Nicola and Otway Red. Never refrigerate or put them in plastic bags. Place them in a cardboard box lined with paper away from the light.

To prepare leeks, slice off roots ends and coarse green tops. Either slice thinly or cut in half lengthways and put into a large bowl of cold water. Using your hands lift them from underneath and toss them through water. Leave 30 seconds and scoop out and drain.

For low-fat mashed potatoes try mashing potato with a little of the hot stock in which they were boiled. Beat in low-fat milk and white pepper. You could combine some mashed parsnip with nutmeg or mashed peas into the potato mash. Pontiac, desiree and Sebago are good varieties for mashing.

Corn and Tomatoes

Tomatoes should not be refrigerated as the cold makes them mushy. If they are slightly under ripe, leave them on the window sill. Otherwise, keep out of direct sunlight and use within a few days. Store stem side down for maximum storage life.

To reduce the acidity in tomato based sauces and dishes, add a little chopped carrot.

Buy corn cobs that are plump with glossy tassels.



Kate McGhie