

Lettuce Parcels

- 1 large avocado
 - 1/2 melon
 - 6 iceberg lettuce leaves
 - 6 baby bocconcini cheeses
 - 6 cherry tomatoes
 - 2 tbsp finely cut chives
 - 1 tbsp toasted sesame seeds
 - juice of 1 lemon
 - a few sprigs of dill or fennel
- Serves 6**



Using a melon baller, scoop out balls of avocado and melon. Line a dish with lettuce leaves. Top with avocado and melon balls, bocconcini and tomatoes. Sprinkle with chives and sesame seeds and drizzle with lemon juice. Garnish with sprigs of dill.

Vegetable Juices Are Good For Us

Avoid mixing fruit and vegetables together in a juice. Root vegetables can be used together, or mixed with celery, but otherwise stick to one type of vegetable at a time.



Beetroot Juice

Feed a peeled, medium beetroot and 3 sticks of celery through your juicer.

Carrot Juice

Feed three large, washed or peeled carrots through your juicer.

Celery Juice

Feed 5 sticks of celery through your juicer.



Savoury Vegetable Cake

- 500 g cauliflower flowerets
 - 300 g baby spinach leaves
 - 400 g carrots, peeled
 - salt
 - 3 eggs
 - 3 tbsp olive oil
 - freshly ground black pepper
 - a selection of herbs, e.g. coriander, parsley, chervil
- Serves 4 – 6**

You need a buttered 1 1/2 litre mould, the base lined with baking paper.



Wash the 3 vegetables and cook separately in boiling, salted water, or steam or microwave them. Press the cooked spinach by hand to extract as much water as possible. In a blender, separately blend each vegetable with 1 egg, 1 tbsp oil and some pepper to a very smooth purée.

Preheat oven to 200°C.

Place a layer of puréed carrot into mould. Top with a layer of cauliflower then a layer of spinach. Seal mould with foil and place it in a bath of hot water in a roasting tray. Cook in preheated oven for about 45 minutes.

Remove from oven and pass a blade around the sides of mould. Unmould gently and serve cake topped with sprigs of fresh herbs.

Vegetable Filo Tartlets

- 3 tbsp milk
- 2 tsp cornflour
- 60 g ricotta cheese
- 1 egg
- 2 tbsp grated parmesan cheese
- a pinch of chilli powder
- 1 tsp ground paprika
- 1/2 tsp ground nutmeg
- 2 cups mixed cooked vegetables, diced or sliced, e.g. beans, peas, zucchini, spinach, pumpkin, mushrooms
- 3 sheets of filo pastry
- olive oil

Makes 6 tartlets in a greased muffin tin

Preheat oven to 200°C.

In a bowl, mix milk with cornflour. Whisk in ricotta cheese, eggs, grated parmesan, chilli, paprika and nutmeg. Stir in your selection of vegetables.

Brush a sheet of filo with oil. Top with another sheet, brush with oil, then top with the last sheet of filo. Cut into 6 even rectangles and gently line greased muffin tins with the filo. The edges of the pastry can protrude from the top of the tin. Bake in oven until the pastry has very lightly browned.

Spoon the vegetable mix into the pastry shells, reduce oven to 150°C and bake for a further 15 minutes until the vegetables and egg have set.



Grilled Salmon with Asparagus

- 20 thick green asparagus
 - salt
 - 4 pieces salmon fillet, each about 150 g
 - 3 tbsp olive oil
 - freshly ground black pepper
 - juice of 1 lime
 - 2 tbsp finely sliced dill
 - 2 hard-boiled eggs, optional
- Serves 4**

Wash asparagus in cold water and trim thick hard ends. Cook asparagus in a large amount of salted boiling water until just tender but still firm.

Meanwhile, coat salmon with half the oil and season with salt and pepper. Grill salmon on medium heat for about 2 1/2 minutes on each side.

Mix lime juice with remaining oil and dill.

Serve salmon and asparagus on plates with slices of hard-boiled eggs and spoon the dressing over the top.



FRESH TASTES

Cottage Cheese and Vegetable Nibbles

2 regular celery sticks
200 g cottage cheese
1 continental cucumber
6 small potatoes, cooked in their skin
e.g. kipfler or bintjes
freshly ground black pepper
Serves 6

Decorate nibbles with chopped chives and other herbs.

Fill celery sticks with cottage cheese. Peel cucumber and cut into 3 cm cylinders. Remove most of the cucumber seeds then fill the cavity with cottage cheese. Peel potatoes, scoop out about one-third of their flesh to make a hole, then fill with cottage cheese.

Tomato Surprise

6 large tomatoes
1 egg yolk
1 tsp mustard
2 tsp red vinegar
2 tbsp cream cheese, diced
2 tbsp olive oil
salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 medium carrot
1 turnip, cooked
1 cup green beans, cooked
1/2 cup peas, cooked
Serves 6

Cut the top off tomatoes to form a lid. Scoop out tomato flesh (use it for something else). Using an electric beater, combine egg yolk, mustard and vinegar. Beat in cream cheese and oil and season with salt and pepper. Dice carrots, turnips and beans and mix into the cream cheese preparation with the peas. Fill tomatoes with filling and replace the lids.

Grilled Steak with Spinach and Sauteed Potatoes

1 lean steak, about 150 g
1 1/2 tbsp olive oil
1 tsp chopped thyme
a little cracked pepper
1 medium potato
1 tbsp diced onion
a small sprig of rosemary
2 cups baby spinach leaves, washed
a little salt
a pinch of grated nutmeg
2 tsp pinenuts, lightly toasted
Serves 1



Serve steak on a bed of spinach with potatoes around it. Sprinkle with pinenuts and serve.

Season steak with a third of the olive oil, the thyme and cracked pepper.

Peel and dice potato into 1 cm cubes. Place in a saucepan, cover with cold water and boil for 2 minutes then drain.

Heat a third of the olive oil in a non-stick pan and cook diced potato, onion and rosemary, stirring from time to time. Meanwhile, cook spinach in remaining oil in a large, non-stick pan.

Lastly, cook steak on a hot grill. Season steak with a little salt and spinach with a pinch of nutmeg.

Nectarine or Other Fruit Flans

Grease a 20 cm pie or cake tin and line the base with baking paper.

100 g Marie biscuits, crushed
50 g melted butter or margarine
50 g finely chopped almonds or hazelnuts
1 1/2 cups milk
1 tbsp grated lemon zest
20 g extra butter
1/2 cup caster sugar
2 tbsp plain flour, sifted
2 eggs
4 nectarines
Serves 6

Combine biscuit crumbs with melted butter and almonds. Press crumb mixture into the base and two-thirds up the sides of prepared tin. Place tin in freezer while preparing filling.

Preheat oven to 200°C.

In a small pan, heat milk, lemon zest and extra butter. In a bowl, combine sugar, sifted flour, egg and hot milk. Halve nectarines, remove stones, then cut each half into 4 segments. Neatly arrange nectarines in prepared tin, then slowly pour custard over fruits.

Carefully place flan in oven, lower oven to 150°C and bake for about 30 minutes or until custard is set. Remove from oven and allow to cool in tin. Refrigerate until ready to unmould.



Summer Fruit Gelée

2 cups apple juice or water
1/2 cup sugar
1 cinnamon stick
1/2 vanilla pod, split open
8 apricots
4 peaches
4 blood plums
3 tsp gelatine powder (a 10 g sachet)
Serves about 8

Bring water containing the sugar, cinnamon stick and vanilla pod to a simmer.

Wash apricots, peaches and plums. Halve fruits, remove stones and cut each half in half again. Add fruits to pan and simmer for 15 minutes.

Remove 1/2 cup juice from pan and place in a bowl. Mix gelatine powder into juice in bowl and stir until all dissolved, then stir this back into pan.

Carefully transfer fruits and juice to a mould or bowl. Allow to cool, then refrigerate for at least 12 hours before unmoulding.

Open Sandwich

Wholemeal, rye or olive bread make a good base for these open sandwiches

6 large slices good bread
6 tbsp hummus or other spread, e.g. ricotta, eggplant etc
a selection of cold meats, or some smoked salmon or cheese
1 small handful rocket leaves
1/2 avocado, sliced
6 slices cucumber
6 cherry tomatoes, halved
a few sprigs of dill, coriander or parsley
1 tbsp capers, optional
Makes 6 sandwiches

Place bread slices on board and spread with hummus or other spread. Top with your selection of cold meat, smoked salmon or cheese and a variety of vegetables. Add a few capers or a few sprigs of herbs and serve.



HELPFUL HINTS

While these recipes have been especially designed for women, they make for great family nourishment with an emphasis on light, healthy eating.

- Consuming a variety of vegetables regularly can help reduce the risk of many cancers.
- Keep your weight down by eating more vegetables and less fat and sugar.
- Keep your skin beautiful by eating more yellow vegetables, like carrots, pumpkin, and sweet potatoes.
- Tahini is a sesame paste. It's high in calcium and is used in the preparation of hummus. It can also be used as a spread in sandwiches.
- A piece of grilled lean meat is an excellent source of iron. Many women lack iron.
- If you choose to be vegetarian, make sure you eat a wide variety of vegetables, as well as vegetarian protein, such as beans, lentils, tofu and cereals.
- Freshly cut fruits and low-fat yoghurt are desserts high in calcium and are especially beneficial for women.
- Cut down on coffee, and nourish yourself with a smoothie, using fresh fruit, low-fat milk and yoghurt.
- Make yourself a healthy salad with canned fish, such as tuna, salmon or sardines which are high in calcium.



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