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# Dinner for One

How Cooking in  
Paris Saved Me

  
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BOOKS



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Dinner for One: How Cooking in Paris Saved Me

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# Recipes

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The following recipes are pulled from different parts of my life and various influences, with the strongest and most profound influence coming from cooking dinner for one in Paris. The meals I made, and continue to make, in my small red-and-white-tiled kitchen are an unwavering source of comfort and joy in my life. For me this collection of recipes represents a significant turning point in my life journey and I wouldn't be the person I am today without it.

I'm thrilled that I am able to share these recipes with you. I hope that if you find yourself cooking one or two or several of them, your taste buds dance with delight as much as mine do when sitting down to indulge in your very own dinner for one.

# Pasta Salad

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This was a staple during my Hartford years. Gabbie still remembers it. For me it symbolizes the naivety and beauty of being in one's early twenties. You're old enough to live independently but you still have a few years to figure life out and the consequences of your decisions and actions don't seem to hold that much weight. You can wing it and get by.

## Ingredients

### DRESSING

*1 tablespoon and 2 teaspoons olive oil*

*2 teaspoons Dijon mustard*

*1 teaspoon lemon juice*

*2 teaspoons cilantro*

*Salt*

*Pepper*

### PASTA

*1 cup (100 grams) penne or orzo pasta*

*2 tablespoons crumbled feta*

*1 tablespoon sundried tomatoes, finely diced*

*A handful of cherry tomatoes, sliced*

*¼ cucumber, cubed*

*½ red onion, finely diced*

*½ an avocado*

## Preparation

### DRESSING

1. Whisk together olive oil, lemon juice and Dijon mustard. Salt and pepper to taste.

### PASTA

1. Bring heavily salted pot of water to boil.
2. Add pasta and cook according to directions on the package; you want the pasta soft not al dente.
3. When finished, drain and rinse under cold water, put to the side and allow to cool while you prep the vegetables.
4. Toss the vegetables with the pasta, then add the dressing, feta and cilantro. Taste and adjust accordingly.

# Chicken Sausage Salad

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In hindsight, I recognize that in the period between November 2009 and September 2010, when Hartford stopped being fun and I wanted out but didn't know how to leave, I experienced my first bout of depression and self-medicating. I had to continue to be "fun Sutanya." I exercised to feel in control and worthy enough to actually change my life. I believed if I could achieve the goal of losing weight and getting into shape, I would be confident enough to move back to a bigger city. During that time my local Whole Foods supermarket (I *really* miss Whole Foods) sold a variety of chicken sausages that were low enough in calories and high enough in protein that they aligned with my manic eating regimen and exercise routine.

## Ingredients

### DRESSING

*1 ½ tablespoons olive oil*  
*1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar*  
*Salt*  
*Black pepper*

### SALAD

*1 ½ chicken sausages, sliced*  
*1 romaine heart lettuce, chopped*  
*4 mozzarella balls, halved*  
*6 cherry tomatoes, halved*  
*½ an avocado, diced*

## Preparation

### DRESSING

1. Whisk together olive oil, balsamic vinegar, add salt and pepper according to your taste.

### SALAD

1. Sautee sliced chicken sausage in a skillet or pan on medium heat until brown.
2. Place romaine on plate and top with the other salad ingredients.
3. If salad dressing has separated simply mix again, recombine and drizzle over salad.

# Vegetable Hummus Sandwich

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In the beginning of my transatlantic relationship with TFM, before either of us was thinking about marriage but knew we wanted to be together, I moved back home with my parents and was working at a branding agency in New York City. My mother made most of my meals and I didn't object. Because I was living at home I usually brought my own lunch to work and when it wasn't my mom's leftovers, this sandwich was one of my favorites. In between working on pitches and brand strategies, I would find a quiet spot to reread a conversation or an email between TFM and me while eating my vegetable and hummus sandwich.

## Ingredients

*Two slices of bread (I like sourdough or whole grain), toasted*

*2 tablespoons hummus*

*6 thin slices of cucumber*

*½ an avocado, sliced*

*⅓ cup shredded carrots*

*4 teaspoons crumbled feta cheese*

*Salt*

*Ground black pepper*

*Red pepper flakes*

## Preparation

1. Spread a layer of hummus onto each slice of toasted bread.
2. Top one slice of bread with cucumbers, avocado, shredded carrots and feta cheese. Sprinkle with a pinch of salt and a crackle of black pepper. Finish with a dash of red pepper flakes.
3. Complete the sandwich by placing the second slice of bread on top.



# *Mini Burgers;*

## **DUCK and CAMELIZED ONION TARTLETS**

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TFM and I did not have a traditional seated wedding dinner. We wanted to do something that reflected the ease and nonstuffiness of our relationship, so we had a cocktail reception. That meant a menu of finger foods that represented both of our cultures, and lots of wine. The menu at our wedding mirrored the fusion of cultures that we hoped to create in our new life as husband and wife.

### **MINI BURGERS**

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*Like many of the tart recipes in this book, this recipe is impossible to make for one, or at least I haven't figured it out yet. This recipe should make about 8-10 that you can make for yourself, freezing half for a later date or to share with an upcoming lunch or dinner guest.*

### *Ingredients*

*500 grams lean minced beef  
2 red onions, sliced in semicircles  
1 egg  
20 grams butter (salted or unsalted)  
10 grams bread crumbs  
15 grams grated Parmesan  
¼ teaspoon salt, plus a pinch if using unsalted butter  
Pepper  
Olive oil*

### *Preparation*

1. Preheat oven to gas mark 7/425°F/220°C.
2. Melt butter in a small pan; add red onions and a pinch of salt (if using unsalted butter) and cover. Stir occasionally;

the goal is to get them as caramelized as possible while you make the burgers.

3. Beat egg in a large bowl, add Parmesan, bread crumbs, salt, beef and a good crackle of black pepper and mix together until combined.
4. Form 8-10 small burgers.
5. Place burgers on a parchment lined, or lightly greased (with olive oil), baking sheet.
6. Bake for 17 minutes, or until cooked through.
7. Top with caramelized onions and any other favorite toppings.
8. Serve on mini hamburger buns.

## **DUCK *and* CARMELIZED ONION TARTLETS**

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### *Ingredients*

*1 confit duck leg, store bought or homemade*

*1 puff pastry sheet*

*35 grams salted butter*

*2 white onions*

*Brown sugar, a pinch*

*Salt and pepper, to taste*

### *Preparation*

1. Slice onions and put in a warm pan with melted butter, sprinkle a dash of sugar and stir. Turn heat down to low, cover the pan and cook for 20-30 minutes until golden brown. When golden brown transfer to a bowl and allow to cool.
2. If using store-bought confit, cook according to directions on the package. When finished, remove the meat from the bone and shred. If using homemade duck confit there is no need to reheat before shredding.

3. Preheat oven to gas mark 6/400°F/200°C.
4. Use a round cookie cutter to cut the puff pastry into smaller circles. Cutter sizes between 3 and 4 inches work best.
5. Place each individual small round of puff pastry into the lightly greased pockets of a tartlet or muffin tray.
6. Spoon caramelized onions into each pastry-lined pocket and top with shredded duck.
7. Put in oven and bake until golden brown, about 10-12 minutes.

# *Tarte Tatin;*

## **CONFIT DE CANARD *with* CRISPY POTATOES; ALGERIAN FELFLA SALAD**

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### **TARTE TATIN**

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TFM's favorite dessert. According to him, his grandmother made the most amazing tarte tatin. Mine never did reach that mythical status but it was pretty decent and I enjoyed making something that brought back memories of happy times with his grandmother whom he loved dearly. Making this tart was my attempt at telling him, "I love you and I understand what's important to you."

### *Ingredients*

*6 medium apples, Pink lady or Gala are ideal*

*1 puff pastry sheet*

*1 teaspoon flaky sea salt*

*2 tablespoons lemon juice*

*1 vanilla bean halved and scraped or 2 teaspoons of vanilla*

*1 cup (200 grams) white sugar*

*10 tablespoons (150 grams) unsalted butter*

*¼ teaspoon cinnamon*

*¼ teaspoon nutmeg*

*⅛ teaspoon ground ginger*

### *Preparation*

1. Preheat oven to gas mark 6/400°F/205°C.
2. Peel and core apples, cut into wedges and toss with lemon juice to prevent browning and put to the side.
3. Melt 50 grams of butter in skillet and add apples rounded side up; precook for 10 minutes then remove with tongs and put to the side.

4. Add salt, butter, sugar and vanilla to the skillet on low-medium heat, stir continuously until the butter and sugar dissolve and the mixture begins to brown—this is your caramel.
5. Once the caramel is brown and not hard, begin adding the apples in the circular form, purposely crowding them together.
6. Sprinkle cinnamon, nutmeg and ginger on apples.
7. Place puff pastry over the sautéed apples; the apples should be touching the puff pastry.
8. Tuck the edges in tightly all around and make a small cut in the center; this will serve as a vent.
9. Bake for 25-30 minutes, until the puff pastry is golden brown.
10. Use butter knife to loosen the edges and let the tarte cool for 20-30 minutes.
11. Invert by topping the skillet with a serving plate; holding the skillet and plate together tightly, flip quickly. Remove the pan; if any apples are stuck to the pan, remove and place them in the missing slot(s).
12. Eat warm with a dollop of ice cream or crème fraîche.

## **CONFIT DE CANARD *with* CRISPY POTATOES** **(DUCK CONFIT *with* CRISPY POTATOES)**

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The first time I met my mother-in-law, she made this for lunch and I loved it so much that it became *my* dish. She made it fairly regularly and every time was better than the last. It is a warm and comforting dish that feels and tastes like the ultimate “mom meal”—a dish that is a labor of love, and as the aroma makes its way out of the kitchen and throughout the entire house, it envelops you in that love. Whenever she made it I felt like a part of the family.

*\*I recommend making the duck in advance because it's easily reheatable in the oven when you're toward the end of roasting the potatoes.*

## *Ingredients*

### DUCK CONFIT

*1 duck leg*  
*1 teaspoon salt*  
*½ teaspoon ground black pepper*  
*½ teaspoon coriander*  
*½ teaspoon cumin*  
*½ teaspoon dried thyme*  
*½ garlic clove, sliced*  
*1 rosemary branch, finely chopped*

## *Preparation*

### Duck confit

1. The process starts the day before you actually start cooking. Mix the salt, ground black pepper, coriander, cumin, sliced garlic, dried thyme and rosemary together. Rub mixture all over the duck leg. Wrap tightly in plastic wrap and place in the refrigerator overnight.
2. The next day when you're ready to cook, preheat the oven at gas mark 3/325°F/165°C
3. Wipe the marinade off the duck leg with a paper towel; don't wash. Then place skin down in an ovenproof skillet on medium heat until the duck starts to produce its own fat. When there is close to half an inch of fat in the pan, which takes about 15-20 minutes, flip the duck, cover the skillet with aluminum and place it in the oven.
4. Roast for 1 hour 30 minutes then remove the aluminum and continue to roast until the duck is a nice golden-brown color and crisps up; that should take another 45 minutes to 1 hour.
5. Remove the duck from the fat but don't throw away the duck fat; you're going to use it for the potatoes!

## *Ingredients*

### CRISPY POTATOES

*4 fingerling potatoes; if not available 1-2 Yukon or new potatoes will do*

*2 garlic cloves*

*1 tablespoon fresh rosemary*

*1 tablespoon duck fat*

*½ teaspoon salt, or to taste*

*1 teaspoon pepper*

*Big pinch paprika*

## *Preparation*

1. Preheat oven to gas mark 7/425°F/220°C.
2. Leaving the skin on, wash and cut the potatoes lengthwise.
3. Put the potatoes in a large pot of salted water; the water should cover the potatoes. Bring to a rolling boil for about 7-9 minutes, until the potatoes are tender but not falling apart.
4. While the potatoes are boiling, mince the garlic cloves and roughly chop the rosemary.
5. When the potatoes are finished, drain and immediately put them back in the empty but hot pot.
6. Cover the pot and shake for about 45 seconds; this will rough up the edges and also help them steam at the same time.
7. Lay the potatoes on a parchment-lined baking sheet and toss with the duck fat, garlic, rosemary, salt, pepper and a pinch of paprika. If the duck fat has congealed, melt so that it's pretty warm. You want a small sizzle when they're tossed with the potatoes.
8. Since the potatoes are semicooked, you can break off a tiny piece of one to taste and adjust.

9. Before roasting turn all of the potatoes skin side up, roast for 15-20 minutes or until they become nice and brown and even more tender.
10. Flip so that the skin side is down and roast for another 15-20 minutes until the potatoes are evenly brown all over. Wrap the duck confit in foil and put back in the oven for the last 10 minutes or so to reheat.

## **ALGERIAN FELFLA SALAD (BELL PEPPER SALAD)**

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TFM is of Algerian-Jewish heritage on his maternal side so he grew up eating his fair share of North African food. The first time his mother made Algerian food for me I felt honored. She was introducing me to their culture by sharing a simple but loved dish. I've tried to re-create it; mine will never be as good as hers (is any dish as good as when a mom makes it?), but I gave it my best shot.

### *Ingredients*

*4 bell peppers (any color or color combination)*

*2 tomatoes, chopped*

*1 garlic clove, minced*

*1 tablespoon olive oil*

*Salt*

*Pepper*

### *Preparation*

1. Preheat oven to gas mark 8/450°F/230°C.
2. Put peppers on a baking sheet lined with aluminum and bake for 30-45 minutes, until the peppers are soft. Black spots on the skin are normal.
3. Remove and allow to cool. Once cooled peel off the skin, remove stem and seeds and cut peppers into strips.



4. Heat olive oil in a pan over medium heat, add garlic, tomatoes and peppers.
5. Cook until tomatoes are soft and all of the vegetables are well incorporated. Add salt and pepper to taste.
6. This salad can be enjoyed by itself, on toast or over rice.

# Bouillabaisse;

## PISSALADIÈRE; MOULES “FRITES”

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These dishes represent a time when my appetite for Paris and French food was insatiable. Yes, the picture-perfect image that I had of the city was starting to fade, but I was also learning so much. The smells still excited me. The flavors floored me. The pastries sang to me. The recipes that follow represent a sweet spot in my time in Paris. A time when I wasn't 100 percent new to the city so I felt more comfortable being on my own, but there was still so much to discover. I first had each of these dishes in restaurants. The recipes that follow are my re-creations of these culinary delights.

### BOUILLABAISSE

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#### *Ingredients*

*7 tablespoons (100 grams) unsalted butter + more if necessary*

*2 scallops, 1 of which should be roughly chopped*

*150 grams fresh shrimp, half with shell and head removed and the other half with the shell and head on*

*200 grams fresh mussels, washed and cleaned*

*2 medium tomatoes, diced*

*2 carrots, chopped*

*1 snapper filleted and cut into 4 parts*

*1 large Yukon potato*

*1 strand thyme*

*1 fennel bulb, roughly chopped*

*1 celery stalk, roughly chopped*

*1 white onion, diced*

*1 small leek, the white and light green parts roughly chopped*

*1 bay leaf*

*½ tablespoon tomato paste*

*½ bulb of garlic, roughly chopped*

*¼ teaspoon saffron threads*

*Pinch fennel seeds*

*Pinch red pepper flakes*

*Zest of ½ lemon*

*Salt*

*Ground black pepper*

*1 liter of water*

*½ cup of dry white wine*

## *Preparation*

### STOCK

1. Melt butter in a big casserole on medium heat and add all of the vegetables, garlic and fennel seeds. Cook, stirring occasionally until soft. When the vegetables have softened add the tomato paste and cook, stirring until completely cooked down and incorporated. Transfer the softened vegetables to a bowl.
2. If necessary, add more butter, then add the roughly chopped scallop, and 75 grams of shrimp with head and shell still intact. Cook until soft, on medium heat.
3. When the fish is soft put the vegetables back into the casserole and mix everything together, still on medium heat.
4. Add wine, bay leaf, thyme, fennel seeds, red pepper flakes, citrus zest, salt and ground black pepper.
5. Cover and cook for about 10 minutes, stirring often to prevent as much sticking as possible, still on medium heat.
6. Add enough water to cover the vegetables and seafood mixture and bring to a rolling boil.
7. Once at a rolling boil reduce to a simmer, add the saffron and taste, adjusting accordingly.

8. Cover and turn heat down to a simmer for 1 hour-1 hour 30 minutes, the longer the better for the flavors to infuse.
9. After 1 hour-1 hour 30 minutes remove as much of the solids as possible from the pot. Blend remaining bits and bobs directly in the pot using an immersion blender or with a countertop blender or food processor. If using food processor or blender transfer broth back to the pot.

### SOUP

1. Chop potato and put in broth, bring to a boil and cook until tender.
2. Add scallop and remaining shrimp, then add mussels, give it a few good stirs and cover for about 5-8 minutes. When the scallop and shrimp are opaque and mussels opened it's ready to plate.
3. Enjoy with thick, crusty whole grain bread, or bread of your choice.

### PISSALADIÈRE

*\*My version of the pissaladière doesn't have any olives simply because I don't like olives. It's a matter of personal taste, but feel free to add olives to yours if you're a fan.*

### *Ingredients*

*1 puff pastry sheet  
7 yellow onions, cut into strips  
8 tablespoons (125 grams) salted butter  
8 anchovy filets, whole  
Salt, to taste  
Black pepper, to taste*

## *Preparation*

1. Melt salted butter in a pan or skillet on medium-high heat.
2. Add onions and mix; the goal is to cover as many onions with the melted butter as possible.
3. Cover and turn the heat down to low and cook for about 50 minutes-1 hour, stirring occasionally. The goal is to cook the onions low and slow in order for them to caramelize and become soft. About 30 minutes into cooking add 2 anchovy filets to the onions and mix; they will dissolve in the onions.
4. When the onions have reduced in size by half and have transformed into a brown color, taste and add salt and pepper accordingly.
5. Heat oven to gas mark 7/425°F/220°C
6. Lay puff pastry in a tart mold dish and transfer onions to the puff pastry in one single layer.
7. Place the anchovy filets on top, trying to cover as much of the surface as possible. The filets don't have to be very close to each other.
8. Bake for 15 minutes, or until the puff pastry is cooked and golden.

## **MOULES “FRITES”** **(MUSSELS *and* “FRENCH FRIES”)**

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I haven't quite mastered French fries yet, so I almost always roast my potatoes if they are not mashed. I recommend roasting the potatoes first because the mussels cook rather quickly. The “frites” recipe is a variation on a similar roasted potato recipe found in this book.

## *Ingredients*

### "FRITES"

*2 potatoes cut into wedges (Yukon or russet potatoes are great options)*

*½ tablespoon olive oil*

*1 teaspoon salt*

*1 teaspoon ground black pepper*

*¼ teaspoon onion powder*

*¼ teaspoon paprika*

### MUSSELS

*1 lb (500 grams) fresh mussels*

*2 teaspoons (10 grams) butter*

*3 garlic cloves, thinly sliced*

*1 shallot, thinly sliced*

*1 cup dry white wine*

*1 parsley branch, roughly chopped*

*¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)*

## *Preparation*

### "FRITES"

1. Wash potatoes and leave the skin on.
2. Add enough water in saucepan to cover the potatoes.
3. Bring potatoes to a boil until they can be easily pierced; this usually takes about 7-10 minutes.
4. Remove the potatoes from the pot and immediately dunk into cold water to stop the cooking process.
5. Pat dry with paper towel then slice them lengthwise.

6. Mix olive oil, salt, pepper, paprika, onion powder in a decent-sized bowl, taste and adjust accordingly and then add potatoes in the bowl. Mix to ensure that the potatoes are covered with all of the marinade.
7. Place potatoes on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.
8. Roast at gas mark 8/450°F/230°C for 25 minutes, flipping halfway.

### MUSSELS

1. Thoroughly clean the mussels and discard any that do not close after applying pressure to them.
2. Melt the butter in a large pan and add garlic and shallots on medium heat. Cook until soft.
3. Add the mussels to the pan then white wine and mix well.
4. Cover and let cook for 5 minutes; give the pan a little shake to encourage any mussels that haven't opened. Sprinkle with parsley and mix before covering again for another 5-7 minutes.
5. Remove from heat when most of the mussels are opened; discard any unopened mussels.

# Classic Parisian Apéro Dînatoire

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During the period of time when I was cooking at home, or spending much time at home, TFM took over the kitchen duties while I *apéroed* with my new friends and focused on building my own community in Paris. Most of my friendships in Paris began, and sustained themselves, over *apéros*. An *apéro*, or an *apéritif*, is an early-evening drink enjoyed before dinner, often accompanied by a small snack like nuts, olives and a few chips. It is meant to open one's appetite for the proper sit-down dinner that usually follows. However, my friends and I would take it to the next level with an *apéro dînatoire*—especially if one of us was hosting. An *apéro dînatoire* is a more elaborate affair. It replaces dinner because it includes real food, appetizer-type food, but real food nevertheless. The recipe that follows is everything one would need to have a typical Parisian *apéro dînatoire* at home.

All of the other recipes were written and presented with the thought that you would prepare it for yourself and enjoy for a solo dinner (or two), but an *apéro dînatoire* is too much of a festive event to enjoy alone. I highly recommend sharing this with a friend or two.

A proper *apéro dînatoire* consists of the following:

- Wine
- Saussion or dried meat
- Cheese (at least one hard and one soft)
- Butter (for the bread)
- Smoked fish (usually salmon)
- Bread
- Dips
- Fruit
- Raw vegetables

Your *apéro dînatoire* can and should consist of any combination of your favorite items on the list, but here are my favorite that I use at almost every *apéro dînatoire* that I host.



- **3 different types of dried meat:** jamon serrano, coppa and chorizo (extra spicy)
- **3-4 different types of cheeses:** Brie with truffle, mimolette, goat cheese with herbs and peppercorn
- Smoked salmon
- 2 baguettes
- **Dips:** hummus and tzatziki
- Strawberries and red grapes
- Baby tomatoes and baby carrots

After you've washed everything that needs a quick rinse (the veggies), you simply arrange all the ingredients on pretty plates and have a sip of wine (and sneak a bite or two) while you wait for your guests to arrive.

# *Tatin De Légume (Vegetable Tarte);*

## **SESAME CHICKEN**

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I rediscovered these dishes as I was consulting old emails between TFM and me. We communicated via email a lot even when we lived together because our relationship was built on that mode of communication and that was the only way we could actually talk openly to each other. These recipes were my last-ditch efforts at being a “good wife”—they were meals TFM liked and that I cooked because I wanted our relationship to work. I wanted to show him that I still loved him and cared.

### **TATIN DE LÉGUME**

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#### *Ingredients*

*1 puff pastry sheet*

*2 small courgettes (zucchini)*

*1 medium eggplant*

*1 medium white onion, minced*

*1 garlic clove, minced*

*6 basil leaves*

*1 tablespoon olive oil or knob of butter*

*Salt*

*Pepper*

*½ teaspoon ground coriander*

*A few slices of sundried tomatoes, roughly chopped (this is optional but I find that this adds nice color and a bit of pep but it is also simple and delicious without)*

#### *Préparation*

1. Wash eggplant and courgettes, remove both ends and cut into ½ inch semicircles.

2. Peel and mince the onions and garlic.
3. Preheat oven to gas mark 6/390°F/200°C.
4. Heat oil/butter, add vegetables, salt, pepper, garlic and ground coriander to sauté pan or skillet and cook for about 10 minutes on medium heat. Stir often to ensure the vegetables cook evenly.
5. When softened, taste and adjust accordingly, adding more seasonings depending on your palate.
6. Place vegetables in tart mold, spread evenly across the surface. No additional greasing or liner needed.
7. Place puff pastry over the vegetable mixture; the vegetables should be touching the puff pastry. Tuck the sides down and prick the tip of the pastry all over with a fork.
8. Bake for 25-30 minutes, until the pastry top is golden brown.
9. Remove from the oven and let rest for about 10 minutes. Remove the tart from the mold by placing a plate on top of the pastry and flipping it over. The vegetables should be on top and the pastry underneath.
10. Garnish with basil and enjoy. Best eaten warm.

## **SESAME CHICKEN**

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### *Ingredients*

#### SAUCE

- 2 teaspoons soy sauce*
- 1 garlic clove, finely minced*
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil*
- 1 teaspoon honey*
- ½ teaspoon salt*
- ½ teaspoon powdered ginger*
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper*

### CHICKEN

*1 skinless boneless chicken thigh, cut into cubes*

*1 tablespoon sesame seeds*

*¼ cup cornstarch*

*1 tablespoon sesame oil*

*Salt*

*Pepper*

### *Preparation*

### SAUCE

1. Mix all the sauce ingredients in a bowl, taste and adjust accordingly and put to the side.

### CHICKEN

1. Pat dry chicken thigh with paper towel then chop into cubes and sprinkle with salt and pepper.
2. Toss the cubes in cornstarch, making sure every bit is covered.
3. Heat 1 tablespoon of sesame oil in a frying pan or skillet.
4. When the oil is hot, fry the chicken cubes until done.
5. Transfer the chicken to the bowl with the sauce and coat.
6. Add the sesame seeds; if necessary add more sesame seeds to ensure that every morsel is covered.
7. Serve with warm rice.

# Hard Boiled Eggs;

## GROWN-UP GRILLED CHEESE SANDWICH; SARDINES *on* TOAST

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The recipes that follow highlight the point in my Paris journey where cooking for myself was put firmly on the back burner. During this time, if I did cook for myself it wasn't for pleasure; it was merely a means to an end. I have slightly jazzed up these recipes but the foundation of what they are made of and their purpose—quickest and easiest route to put some food into my stomach—holds true.

### HARD-BOILED EGGS TOPPED *with* FETA *and* RED PEPPER FLAKES

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*\*I like my hard-boiled eggs well-done, no runny yolks welcomed here, and the recipe will reflect that. If you decide to make this very simple but delicious meal please cook the hard-boiled eggs to your preferred level of doneness.*

### *Ingredients*

*2 large eggs  
4 teaspoons (20 grams) feta cheese, crumbled  
Dash of red pepper flakes  
Salt  
Ground black pepper  
Drizzle of olive oil*

### *Preparation*

1. Put eggs in a pot of cold water; there should be enough water to cover the eggs.
2. Bring eggs to a rolling boil on high heat and leave to boil for 15 minutes.

3. After 15 minutes remove eggs from boiling water and either run under cold water or transfer to a bowl of ice-cold water.
4. Remove the shell then cut in half.
5. Sprinkle with salt and pepper first, then the feta and finally the red pepper flakes.
6. Drizzle with olive oil.

## **GROWN-UP GRILLED CHEESE SANDWICH (OPEN-FACED)**

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### *Ingredients*

*2 thick slices of bread*  
*½ medium courgette (zucchini), cut on the diagonal*  
*½ red onion, thinly sliced*  
*6 thin slices of scamorza cheese*  
*½ tablespoon sunflower oil (1 tablespoon unsalted butter can be used  
as substitute)*  
*½ teaspoon butter, for spreading*  
*1 small garlic clove, minced*  
*¼ teaspoon salt*  
*¼ teaspoon pepper*  
*½ teaspoon cayenne pepper*  
*½ teaspoon cumin*  
*½ teaspoon smoked paprika*  
*Fresh cilantro and red pepper flakes, for garnish*

### *Preparation*

1. Turn on the oven broiler to preheat.
2. Put courgette and garlic in a bowl and toss with salt, pepper, cayenne pepper, cumin and smoked paprika; mix.
3. Add oil, or butter, to a skillet or small pan on medium-low

heat. Add onions and cook until tender. Pour the contents of the bowl into the skillet or pan and stir. Continue stirring occasionally until the vegetables are cooked through and tender, about 10 minutes.

4. Taste and adjust according to your palate.
5. Remove vegetables from the skillet, or pan, and wipe it clean with a paper towel. The goal is to remove the excess spices.
6. Butter both sides of both slices of bread and put in skillet, toasting one side until golden brown.
7. Place both slices of bread on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper, toasted side down.
8. Add three slices of scamorza on top of each slice of bread and put under the grill/broiler. Toast until the cheese is melted and bubbly, only a few minutes. Keep your eye on the toast.
9. Remove from the oven, and top with vegetable mix. Garnish with cilantro and a sprinkle of red pepper flakes.

## **SARDINES ON TOAST**

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### *Ingredients*

*2 thick slices of bread (I prefer multigrain or sourdough, but you can choose your favorite)*

*1 can of sardines*

*1 big garlic clove*

*¼ red onion sliced in circles*

*½ avocado*

*¼ teaspoon lemon juice*

*Red pepper flakes*

*Salt*  
*Pepper*  
*Olive oil*  
*Parsley*

### *Preparation*

1. Cut garlic clove in half and rub on the slices of bread.
2. Slice the onion.
3. Toast bread.
4. While the bread is toasting, put avocado, lemon juice, a sprinkle of red pepper flakes, some salt and pepper in a bowl and roughly mash together. You want the mixture to be slightly chunky.
5. When the bread is finished toasting spread the avocado toast on one side, then layer the sardines on top, followed by the red onions, a generous sprinkling of black pepper and a drizzle of olive oil.
6. Garnish with parsley.
7. Place the other slice of bread on top and enjoy.



# *Leek Anchovy And Goat Cheese Tart;*

**SPICY SHRIMP *and* RICE**

---

My girlfriends! Where would I be without them? I'm a girl's girl through and through. I've never viewed women as competition. We're sisters going through life together. We cry together, laugh together and lift each other up. When I was at my lowest low, they stood by me and helped me, never deserted me, and loved me even more. The following recipes are some of my girlfriends' favorite dishes that I've made for them.

## **LEEK, ANCHOVY *and* GOAT CHEESE TART**

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### *Ingredients*

*2 leeks, white and light green parts roughly chopped*

*2 small spring onions, diced*

*2 eggs*

*4-6 anchovy filets (depending on how much of an anchovy fan you are), finely chopped*

*½ cup crème fraîche*

*½ cup (100 grams) fresh goat cheese, crumbled*

*20 grams salted butter*

*1 puff pastry sheet*

*¼ teaspoon salt + pinch*

*1/3 teaspoon paprika*

*Ground black pepper*

### *Preparation*

1. Preheat oven to gas mark 4/350°F/170°C.
2. Melt the butter in a pan over medium heat.

3. Add leeks and onions to melted butter. Add a pinch of salt and a little bit of pepper; allow to soften about 5-8 minutes.
4. In a bowl whisk together eggs, crème fraîche, anchovies,  $\frac{1}{3}$  teaspoon salt, black pepper and paprika.
5. Put puff pastry in a tart mold and add leek and onion mixture in a single layer.
6. Pour egg and cream mixture on top, then liberally sprinkle crumbled cheese as the final layer.
7. Bake for 25-30 minutes until golden brown.

## **SPICY SHRIMP *and* RICE**

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### *Ingredients*

#### SPICY SHRIMP

*60 grams shrimp—peel and devein if necessary*  
*1 ½ tablespoon olive oil*  
*1 tablespoon butter*  
*2 teaspoons red pepper flakes*  
*1 tablespoon dried herbs (coriander, oregano or parsley will do. I usually like using a dried herb blend but it's not absolutely necessary)*  
*1 big garlic clove or 2 small- to medium-size cloves*  
*1 teaspoon salt, or to taste*  
*½ teaspoon of ground black pepper, or to taste*  
*½ teaspoon of paprika, or to taste*  
*Fresh coriander for garnish*

#### RICE

*½ cup of Basmati or long grain rice*  
*2 cups water*  
*½ teaspoon salt*  
*Knob of butter*

## *Preparation*

### SPICY SHRIMP

1. Season the shrimp with salt, ground black pepper, dried herbs and paprika, then put to the side.
2. Thinly slice garlic cloves, then put to the side.
3. Begin to heat the pan under low heat, and then add olive oil. Wait for the pan to slightly warm up, but not to the point where it is smoking, then add butter.\*
4. Add garlic and allow to soften.
5. Add red pepper flakes.
6. Add shrimp.
7. Make nice big circular stirring motions so that everything blends well.
8. Allow shrimp to cook for 5-10 minutes maximum until they are nice and pink, and slightly firm and plump.
9. Once all cooked, serve over white rice.

*\*If the sauce begins to get less saucy as the shrimp is cooking feel free to add more butter, but the more butter you add be sure to top it up with some garlic powder, or more fresh garlic if you have any, and red pepper flakes because you don't want to lose the spicy garlic flavor.*

### RICE

1. Rinse and drain rice, add to a small pot. Add water.
2. Add salt and butter.
3. Mix and bring to a boil.

4. At boil cover the pot and turn down to a simmer; the rice will steam cook.\*

*\*The rice should cook in about 10 minutes, but you should periodically check the rice to make sure it's not getting too dry before it's actually finished cooking. If you like your rice soft like me and you notice the water is all dried out but the grains are still crunchy just add a tiny bit of water to continue the steaming process. The addition of the water should help to continue to steam the rice.*

# *Burrata With Toasted Noisettes And Olive Oil;*

**TATAKI DE THON ROUGE** *with* **CRÈME D'AVOCAT;**  
**CARROT SOUP TOPPED** *with* **FRESH GOAT  
CHEESE, LARDONS** *and* **SUNFLOWER SEEDS**

---

I wish I could take credit for creating these recipes but I can't. I neglected my kitchen during this time, and luckily Sunset was there to provide most of my meals. The menu at Sunset changed regularly but these were my favorites and I hope that my re-creation of these sensory delights has done them justice.

## **BURRATA**

*with* **TOASTED HAZELNUTS** *and* **OLIVE OIL**

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### *Ingredients*

*1 small burrata (about 120-125 grams)*

*3 teaspoons roughly chopped skinless hazelnuts (about 10-12 grams of  
whole hazelnuts)*

*1 teaspoon olive oil*

*Dash of salt*

### *Preparation*

1. Remove burrata from container or plastic wrap, shaking off excess liquid before putting it on a plate or in a bowl. This first step is very important; straight out of the refrigerator burrata is not the way to go. Room temperature is ideal.
2. Heat a skillet on medium-low heat; once hot add hazelnuts in a single layer. Nuts burn easily so don't walk away. Stir occasionally for about 5-6 minutes until fragrant.
3. Remove from heat and put to the side.

4. Soft slice in the middle of burrata. Soft slice means cut in the middle just enough to open the cheese, without slicing in half.
5. Sprinkle salt all over the cheese.
6. Sprinkle the hazelnuts on top of the salt and cheese.
7. Drizzle with olive oil.

## **TATAKI DE THON** *with* **CRÈME D'AVOCAT**

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### *Ingredients*

#### TATAKI DE THON

*90 grams raw ahi tuna*

*2 teaspoons soy sauce*

*1 teaspoon mirin*

*1 ½ teaspoon grated fresh ginger*

*½ tablespoon sesame oil*

*½ teaspoon sesame seeds, the color doesn't matter. I prefer white  
sesame seeds, but you can use black or a mixture*

*1 tablespoon of neutral cooking oil, reserve for cooking*

#### CRÈME D'AVOCAT

*1 small ripe avocado or 1/2 large avocado*

*1 teaspoon lemon juice, or to taste*

*½ tablespoon crème fraîche*

*1 teaspoon of olive oil*

*Salt*

*Pepper*

*Paprika*

*Red pepper flakes*

*Cilantro for garnish*

## *Préparation*

### TATAKI DE THON

#### *Part 1*

1. Mix the sesame oil, soy sauce, ginger and mirin together in a bowl.
2. Cut the tuna into semithick slices.
3. Add the tuna to the bowl, making sure all sides are coated in the marinade. Cover and let sit in the refrigerator for 2-3 hours; you can leave it for up to 8 hours to get the maximum flavor. I've tried both marinating times and while there was a slight difference in the depth of the flavor, it wasn't significant.

#### *Part 2*

1. Heat the neutral oil on a medium-high heat.
2. Remove the tuna slices from the marinade and roll each side in the sesame seeds.
3. When the oil is hot sear each side of the tuna. The exterior should be slightly cooked and the inside raw.
4. When finished searing, cut each slice into 4.

### CRÈME D'AVOCAT

1. In a food processor or with a hand mixer pulse together avocado, lemon juice, crème fraîche and olive oil.
2. Add salt, pepper, paprika and red pepper flakes to your taste.
3. Pulse until smooth and creamy; if gritty add more crème fraîche until the texture is smooth and silky.
4. Plate and garnish with cilantro or fresh sprouts.

*\*I like plating this dish with the tuna on top of the crème d'avocat and drizzle with a tiny bit of sesame oil, but you can have fun with it and plate it as you wish.*

**CARROT SOUP**  
**TOPPED *with* FRESH GOAT CHEESE,**  
**LARDONS *and* SEEDS**

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*Ingredients*

*3 medium-size carrots, peeled and roughly chopped*  
*2 cups water*  
*1 tablespoon salted butter*  
*1 cube of vegetable stock*  
*1 garlic clove, minced*  
*½ small white onion, chopped*  
*½ teaspoon fresh ginger, minced (if you don't have fresh, ground  
ginger will be fine)*  
*Salt*  
*Pepper*  
*Paprika*  
*Ground coriander*  
*Ground cumin*  
*Chili powder*  
*Black pepper*  
*25 grams smoked lardon*  
*25 grams crumbled fresh goat cheese*  
*1 tablespoon crème fraîche*  
*Sunflower seeds*

*Preparation*

1. Melt butter in a saucepan then add garlic, onions, ginger and carrots and a pinch of salt. Cook and stir occasionally on medium-high heat until tender, about 10 minutes.



2. Add the water and vegetable stock cube. There should be enough water to cover the carrots; add more if needed.
3. Bring to a boil, then cover and reduce to a simmer for another 10 minutes while the carrots cook.
4. While the carrots are cooking start on the lardons. Add lardons to a cold skillet in a single layer; the goal is for the skillet and lardon to heat up at the same time. Cook on medium heat until the lardons are fragrant, brown and cooked but not super crispy. This should take about 6-8 minutes. Remove from pan and add to paper towel-lined plate.
5. The carrots should be cooked by now; pierce with a fork to check.
6. You can puree the carrots directly in the pot using an immersion blender or puree in a regular blender then return soup to pot.
7. Stir in crème fraîche and start with small pinches of the remaining spices, including salt and pepper. After each pinch taste and adjust accordingly.
8. Pour into bowl and top with lardons and crumbled goat cheese. Garnish with a sprinkling of sunflower seeds.

# *Leek Risotto;*

## **RASPBERRY CLAFOUTIS**

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The men that I cycled through during my Sunset days didn't last and some memories of them are fading, but not the delicious meals they made for me. Some of them were great cooks. It was a part of their seduction technique and it worked every single time. With them, I feasted on their homemade versions of these dishes.

### **LEEK RISOTTO**

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#### *Ingredients*

*1 leek, trimmed and finely chopped into semicircles*  
*2 spring onions, chopped*  
*1 garlic clove, minced*  
*½ cup (100 grams) Arborio rice*  
*2 tablespoons (40 grams) butter*  
*½ glass dry white wine*  
*35 grams finely grated Parmesan cheese*  
*1 tablespoon olive oil*  
*½ teaspoon salt, or to taste*  
*3 cups of hot vegetable or chicken stock*

#### *Preparation*

1. Add 15 grams of butter, the minced garlic and vegetables to a large pot on medium-high heat; stir until vegetables are soft.
2. Add rice and 15 grams of butter and stir over high heat until it becomes translucent.
3. Pour in the white wine and stir continuously so that the rice doesn't stick; the wine should completely evaporate before moving on to the next step.

4. Add salt, then start to add your warm stock a ladle at a time, at a medium-low heat. Allow most of the liquid to absorb before adding more stock. Repeat ladle and evaporation process until rice is al dente, about 20-30 minutes, then you can move on to the next step.
5. Turn heat down very low and add the remaining butter and Parmesan cheese; stir vigorously for a few minutes until everything is incorporated.
6. Turn heat off and garnish with extra Parmesan cheese if you're a cheese lover; if you're not a cheese lover skip this step and simply drizzle with a small spoonful of olive oil.
7. Eat immediately while still warm.

## RASPBERRY CLAFOUTIS

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### *Ingredients*

*2 cups (250 grams) raspberries*  
*1 cup (200 grams) white sugar*  
*1 cup (125 grams) flour*  
*1 cup (240 ml) whole milk*  
*8 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and cooled (98 grams)*  
*1 teaspoon vanilla extract*  
*½ teaspoon almond extract*  
*Pinch of salt*  
*3 large eggs*  
*Dusted sugar (optional)*  
*Vanilla ice cream (optional)*

### *Preparation*

1. Heat oven to gas mark 5/375°F/190°C
2. In a medium bowl, toss raspberries with ¼ cup (50 grams) of sugar and put it to the side.

3. Whisk the flour, sugar and melted butter together until fully incorporated.
4. Pour the milk into the batter, add the eggs and combine, then whisk in the vanilla and almond extracts.
5. Sprinkle with pinch of salt.
6. Place the raspberries in a porcelain or ceramic baking dish.
7. Pour the batter over the fruit.
8. Bake for 20-30 minutes until brown and the edges curl.
9. Let it cool before serving.
10. Add dusted sugar and a dollop of vanilla ice cream on the side, if you'd like.

# Roasted Chicken With Fingerling Potatoes;

## STUFFED DORADE; SALMON ROASTED IN BUTTER; SALMON EN PAPILOTE

---

The first time I made roasted chicken it was good, but it has, fortunately, gotten better over time. These were the first real solo meals that I made for myself when I decided I needed to start taking care of myself and they hold a very special place in my heart. They warmed my heart and nourished my soul when I needed it the most and helped make my apartment feel like a home again, and they're still on regular rotation in my kitchen.

### *Ingredients*

#### ROASTED CHICKEN

- 1 (600-700 gram) Cornish hen (coquelet)*
- 2 tablespoons (40 grams) melted salted butter (if you use unsalted butter add more salt to the marinade)*
- 1 tablespoon olive oil*
- 1 ½ teaspoon salt*
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper*
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika*
- 2 crushed garlic cloves*

#### POTATOES

- 3 fingerling potatoes*
- ½ tablespoon olive oil*
- 1 teaspoon salt*
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper*
- ¼ teaspoon onion powder*
- ¼ teaspoon fresh garlic, chopped*
- ¼ cup of parsley, chopped*

## *Preparation*

### ROASTED CHICKEN

*\*Ideally, you want to marinate the chicken overnight.*

1. In a bowl mix olive oil, salt, black pepper, smoked paprika and garlic cloves. Taste and adjust accordingly. These measurements worked for me, but maybe you like a bit less paprika and more pepper, *fais-toi plaisir*!
2. Pour the mixture all over the chicken and rub it all in. Get under the skin, in the crevices; get very comfortable and familiar with your chicken.
3. Let it sit for 5-7 minutes then pour the melted butter over the chicken. The butter should be completely cooled, but not resolidified.
4. If you're cooking the chicken the same night, leave it out for 15-20 minutes until it gets to room temperature.
5. If you're cooking the chicken the following evening, place it in your favorite Tupperware or other food storage and store in the refrigerator overnight. Be sure to remove it from the refrigerator at least 30 minutes before roasting.
6. Place chicken in baking dish lined with aluminum; if necessary, brush a very thin coat of olive oil on the aluminum to ensure that the chicken doesn't stick.
7. Roast at gas mark 8/450°F/230°C for 45-50 minutes in total. The first 23 minutes or so roast with the chicken breast up then flip and finish the cooking process with the chicken breast down. *\*This is the temperature and cooking time that worked in my Parisian kitchen and with my gas stove. Depending on your stove you may need more time or less. Please use your own judgment when determining whether or not the chicken is finished roasting. In my experience deep brown crackling skin usually means that the chicken is finished.*

## POTATOES

1. Wash potatoes and leave the skin on. Add to a saucepan.
2. Add enough water to saucepan to cover the potatoes.
3. Bring potatoes to a boil until they can be easily pierced, this usually takes about 7-10 minutes.
4. Remove the potatoes from the pot and immediately dunk into cold water to stop the cooking process.
5. Pat dry with paper towel then slice them lengthwise.
6. Mix olive oil, salt, pepper, garlic and onion powder in a decent sized bowl, taste and adjust accordingly and then add potatoes to the bowl. Mix to ensure that the potatoes are covered with all of the marinade.
7. Place potatoes on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.
8. Roast at gas mark 8/450°F/230°C for 25 minutes, flipping halfway.
9. When finished, sprinkle with fresh parsley.

## STUFFED DORADE

### *Ingredients*

*1 whole dorade (head on), scaled and insides removed, sliced open on one side (the fishmonger usually does this for you but be sure to ask)*

*1 tablespoon olive oil + a drizzle*

*½ tablespoon salt*

*1 teaspoon ground black pepper*

*Dash of paprika*

*2 garlic cloves, roughly chopped*

*¼ yellow onion cut in rings*

*½ bunch of fresh parsley*

*½ bunch of fresh cilantro*

## *Preparation*

1. Wash and pat fish dry with paper towel.
2. Preheat oven to gas mark 4/350°F/180°F.
3. Put olive oil, salt, pepper and paprika in a small bowl and mix, taste and adjust accordingly.
4. Transfer fish to parchment-lined cookie sheet.
5. Spoon the marinade on each side of the fish and inside; really get in there.
6. Use the parsley, cilantro, onion and garlic mixture to wipe up any marinade left in the bowl, then drizzle a tiny bit of olive oil and add a bit more salt and pepper.
7. Stuff herbs, garlic and onions into the fish; place the stuffing that didn't fit underneath the fish.
8. Wrap fish with the parchment paper and let sit for 10 minutes.
9. Place on the middle rack of the oven for 30 mins.
10. Enjoy with rice or a crunchy green salad.

## **SALMON ROASTED IN BUTTER**

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### *Ingredients*

*2 tablespoons butter*

*1 tablespoon minced fresh herbs (chervil, parsley or dill)*

*1 salmon fillet, skin on*

*Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste*

*Red pepper flakes*

### *Preparation*

1. Preheat the oven to gas mark 9/475°F/245°C. Place the but-



ter and half the herbs in a roasting pan and place it in the oven. Heat about 5 minutes, until the butter melts and the herbs begin to sizzle.

2. Add the salmon to the pan, skin side up. Roast 4 minutes. Remove from the oven, and then peel the skin off. (If the skin does not lift right off, cook 2 minutes longer.) Sprinkle with salt and pepper and turn the fillet over. Sprinkle with salt and pepper.
3. Roast 3 to 5 minutes more, depending on the thickness of the fillet and the degree of doneness you prefer. Cut into serving portions, spoon a little butter over each, garnish with the remaining herbs and sprinkle a little bit of red pepper flakes over the fish.

## **POTATOES *with* HERB BUTTER**

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I made my own herb butter for this part of the meal. I was very proud of myself, if you don't mind me saying. The herb butter recipe is from *Bon Appétit* and it's essentially idiot-proof. The best thing about this is that it goes with everything.

### *Ingredients*

#### HERB BUTTER

*1 cup (packed) fresh herb leaves (like parsley, chives, and tarragon)*

*½ small garlic clove*

*½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, room temperature*

*¼ teaspoon finely grated lemon zest*

*1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice*

*Kosher salt, freshly ground pepper*

#### POTATOES

*2 Potatoes*

*Salt*

*Pepper*

## *Preparation*

### HERB BUTTER

1. Pulse herbs and garlic in a food processor until finely chopped. Add butter, lemon zest and lemon juice and process until smooth; season with salt and pepper. You will make more than enough for two potatoes, so you can cover and save the rest and add to anything you cook that would benefit from a little herb butter.

### POTATOES

2. Cover potatoes in a pot with cold water and then bring it to a boil.
3. When the potatoes can be pierced with a fork they are pretty much finished.
4. Remove potatoes from hot water, add salt and pepper.
5. Take a tablespoon of herb butter and slather all over the potatoes.

## **SALMON EN PAPILLOTE**

I love this dish because it's like I'm making a little salmon gift for myself. *En papillote* means putting something in a parcel, which is literally what is done in this recipe. Once you get the hang of it, you can use any vegetable medley you want. If you want to use mushrooms, go ahead; if you want to add whole garlic cloves, do as you wish. You can customize to your heart's desire.

## *Ingredients*

*1 salmon filet*

*1 ½ teaspoons olive oil*

*1 knob unsalted butter*

*1 teaspoon table salt*  
*1 teaspoon black pepper*  
*1 teaspoon paprika*  
*A handful of cherry tomatoes*  
*½ courgette (zucchini)*  
*½ fennel bulb*  
*½ white onion*  
*½ teaspoon of red pepper flakes*  
*½ teaspoon of ground coriander*  
*½ teaspoon of ground cumin*  
*½ fresh garlic clove, crushed*  
*1 sprig of fresh thyme (if you don't have fresh thyme, you can leave this out)*

## *Preparation*

1. Preheat the oven to gas mark 6/400°F/200°C.
2. Combine olive oil, salt, pepper, paprika, red pepper flakes, coriander, cumin and garlic powder in a bowl and mix. Adjust to taste and set aside. Cut the fennel and courgette lengthwise, the onion crosswise and the tomatoes in half.
3. Use either parchment paper or aluminum to create the parcel. Personally, I like using parchment paper. Keep in mind that you want the parcel to be big enough to fit the fish and vegetables. Place the salmon in the center of the parchment paper or aluminum sheet and arrange the vegetables around and under. Pour the marinade all over. You may have to get your hands in there to make sure that the marinade is evenly distributed. Add the knob of butter on top of the salmon and if you have a fresh sprig of thyme, add that on top of the butter before creating the parcel for your salmon and vegetables.
4. To create the parcel, think of wrapping a gift—you want all the

corners to be closed and protected. The heat from the oven will create steam and that moisture will cook the salmon.

5. Place the wrapped parcel on a baking sheet or a cookie sheet and bake for 20-25 minutes.

## THE *Dinner For One* GLOW UP RECIPES

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The following recipes represent the sweetness of life and how good it can be when you start to take care of yourself and love yourself. I remember this time very vividly because it was the first time that I felt like I was really shedding my post-divorce skin. The idea of starting a podcast was bouncing around in my head and I had an inkling that I had finally found my “thing.” I walked with my head a little higher and I was slowly rebuilding my confidence. I was selfish, but in a good way. I was my number-one priority and the way that I cooked reflected that.

Cooking for myself became a real source of pleasure; I didn’t want to be numb to the world around me. I wanted, and needed, to fully experience the world around me and the beautiful city I lived in. As I continued to make dinners for one I grew more comfortable using elements of experimentation, boldness and spice in my meals and I continue to sprinkle them throughout my daily life.

# Chocolate Mousse

---

## *Ingredients*

*3.1 oz (90 grams) dark chocolate, chopped*

*1 large egg, separated*

*1 tablespoon salted butter*

*2 tablespoons powdered sugar*

*¼ cup heavy cream, cold*

*½ teaspoon vanilla extract*

*Pinch of salt*

## *Preparation*

1. In a cold bowl whip cold cream with icing (powdered) sugar until you have soft peaks.
2. In another bowl beat the egg white, adding a pinch of salt, until foam bubbles form.
3. Melt chocolate and butter together in a bowl and let cool. When completely cooled whisk in the egg yolk and vanilla extract until smooth.
4. Gently and carefully fold the egg white into the chocolate mixture; when it's all incorporated, repeat the same with the whipped cream. You must fold, do not stir.
5. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least two hours, but preferably overnight.
6. When ready to eat top with chocolate shavings or your favorite fruit.

# *Pistachio Apricot Tart*

---

## *Ingredients*

*1 puff pastry sheet*  
*8-10 apricots, halved and pitted*  
*1 ½ tablespoons sugar*  
*3 tablespoons honey*  
*1 teaspoon ground cardamom*  
*1 teaspoon ground cinnamon*  
*1 teaspoon vanilla*  
*1 ½ cup (150 grams) pistachios, roughly chopped*  
*1 egg*  
*Lemon zest*  
*1 tablespoon (10 grams) pistachios roughly chopped, for garnish*

## *Preparation*

1. Preheat oven to gas mark 6/400°F/200°C.
2. In a bowl stir apricots and sugar, put to the side.
3. Transform pistachios into a fine powder in a food processor, blender or a handheld mixer. Add honey, egg, cardamom, cinnamon and vanilla to the pistachio powder until you've achieved the consistency of paste.
4. Place puff pastry in your tart mold and spread a layer of the pistachio paste over it.
5. Arrange apricots cut side down on top of pistachio paste; it doesn't matter if they're a bit close.
6. Bake until apricots are cooked through and tender and puff pastry is golden brown, about 30-40 minutes.

# Cassoulet

---

The traditional French way of cooking this meal takes hours. This is the quick and dirty version that I like to use when I have a craving for something hearty and filling. The two biggest untraditional things about my recipe are that I replace andouille with chorizo and I use canned beans instead of dry.

## Ingredients

### FOR THE BASE

*100 grams canned haricot beans, drained and washed*

*10 grams smoked lardons*

*5 grams duck fat*

*1 celery stalk, chopped*

*1 small yellow onion, chopped*

*1 bouquet garni (A herb mixture of fresh parsley, thyme and 1 bay leaf tied together with butchers twine)*

*1 carrot, roughly chopped*

*2 garlic cloves, peeled*

*1 chorizo sausage*

*½ teaspoon salt*

*Dash of black pepper*

### FOR THE CASSOULET

*1 confit duck leg*

*5 grams duck fat*

*1 garlic clove*

*10 grams bread crumbs*

## Preparation

1. Heat oven to gas mark 1/250°F/120°C.
2. Melt duck fat in a deep oven-safe pot on medium-low heat. Add celery, carrot, garlic and onion, cook until soft.



3. Add the beans, lardons, sausage and bouquet garni and pour in just enough water to barely cover the vegetables and meats.
4. Bring to a rolling boil; skim off any fat that rose to surface and add salt and pepper.
5. Put the uncovered pot into the oven and cook for 1 hour, stirring halfway through. The beans are already cooked so usually any longer will turn the beans into mush. By this point some of the water should have evaporated and the liquid thickened; if not return to oven for another 15-30 minutes.
6. When the liquid is thick remove the pot from the oven and tuck the duck leg into the bean mixture. Liberally sprinkle over the bread crumbs, duck fat and garlic. Put back into the oven and cook for another 40-50 minutes.
7. This dish is traditionally served in a shallow bowl and garnished with an herb of your choice.

# Steak "Frites"

---

As with Moules "Frites," the potato recipe here is a slight variation on another roasted potato recipe instead of French fries. I recommend roasting them first as the steak cooks rather quickly.

## *Ingredients*

### "FRITES"

*2 potatoes cut into wedges (Yukon or russet potatoes are great options)*

*½ tablespoon olive oil*

*1 teaspoon salt*

*1 teaspoon ground black pepper*

*¼ teaspoon onion powder*

*¼ teaspoon fresh garlic, chopped*

### STEAK

*½ rib eye steak*

*1 tablespoon unsalted butter*

*½ tablespoon vegetable oil*

*1 rosemary branch*

*1 thyme branch*

*1 garlic clove, whole*

*Salt*

*Pepper*

## *Preparation*

### "FRITES"

1. Wash potatoes and leave the skin on.
2. Add enough water in saucepan to cover the potatoes.

3. Bring potatoes to a boil until they can be easily pierced; this usually takes about 7-10 minutes.
4. Remove the potatoes from the pot and immediately dunk into cold water to stop the cooking process.
5. Pat dry with paper towel then slice them lengthwise.
6. Mix olive oil, salt, pepper, garlic and onion powder in a decent-sized bowl, taste and adjust accordingly and then add potatoes in the bowl. Mix to ensure that the potatoes are covered with all of the marinade.
7. Place potatoes on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.
8. Roast at gas mark 8/450°F/230°C for 25 minutes, flipping halfway.

### STEAK

1. Pat dry and season liberally and generously with salt and pepper; let it sit for 30 minutes before cooking.
2. After 30 minutes heat dry cast iron pan or skillet until hot. When hot, add oil and allow oil to heat up.
3. When the oil is also hot add the steak; cook each side by constantly turning every 3 minutes for about 10-12 minutes then baste.
4. Add butter, rosemary and thyme and garlic then tilt the pan toward you so that it all gathers on one side of the pan. Take a spoon and scoop up the herb-and-garlic-infused butter and pour it over the steak until the butter begins to brown; this only takes a few minutes.
5. Remove the steak from the pan and let it rest for 8 minutes before slicing.

# *Canard à la Jamaïcaine*

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## **JAMAICAN JERK DUCK WITH RICE AND PEAS**

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### *Ingredients*

#### JERK MARINADE\*

*3 scotch bonnet peppers  
6 scallion stalks  
7 garlic cloves  
1 yellow onion  
¼ cup soy sauce  
2 tablespoon brown sugar  
1 tablespoon fresh ginger, grated  
1 tablespoon ground black pepper  
½ teaspoon salt  
2 teaspoons all-spice  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
1 teaspoon nutmeg  
1 teaspoon lemon or lime juice  
5 fresh thyme springs  
½ cup neutral oil*

#### DUCK

*1 duck breast, cold  
Salt  
Pepper*

*\*You will not use all of the marinade on one duck breast; there will be lots of leftovers to use on other meats, fish or vegetables.*

## *Preparation*

### JERK MARINADE

1. Roughly chop all of the vegetables then add all of the ingredients to a blender or food processor and blend until fully combined and you're left with a thick marinade.
2. Reserve 2 tablespoons of the marinade, store the rest in an airtight container or jar.

### DUCK

1. Remove duck from the refrigerator and score the skin; be sure not to cut all the way to the flesh.
2. Pour the reserved tablespoons of marinade over the duck and rub in. Get friendly and comfortable with the duck; you want to cover every inch with the marinade, especially the skin that was scored.
3. Cover and return to refrigerator and marinate overnight.
4. Remove the duck breast from the refrigerator about 1 hour before cooking to get it to room temperature.
5. When ready to cook preheat oven to gas mark 6/400°F/200°C.
6. Place duck skin side down on a hot nonstick pan with no oil until golden brown, about 6 minutes. Remove the fat as you cook. When the skin side is brown, repeat on the other side.
7. When both sides are brown, transfer duck to the rack of a roasting pan. Roast skin side up for 17-20 minutes, or until done to your likeness. Allow duck to rest for 5-8 minutes before serving.
8. Serve with Jamaican style rice and peas or favorite side dish or salad.

# *Jamaican Rice and Peas*

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## *Ingredients*

*1 cup long grain or Basmati rice (rinsed and drained)*

*½ cup kidney beans*

*2 cups water*

*1 clove garlic, chopped*

*1 teaspoon butter*

*¼ cup of coconut milk*

*1 scallion*

*1 teaspoon salt*

*¼ teaspoon black pepper*

*1 sprig fresh thyme*

## *Preparation*

1. Place garlic, kidney beans, water and coconut milk in a pot and bring to a boil.
2. Add scallion, salt, butter and black pepper to saucepan and stir in thyme.
3. Stir in rice and bring to a boil.
4. When at a rolling boil turn the temperature down to low, cover the pot and cook until all water is absorbed (about 15 to 20 min).
5. Remove thyme and scallion before serving.

# Braised Lamb Shank

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## Ingredients

*1 lamb shank*  
*1 tablespoon olive oil*  
*½ tablespoon of salt*  
*1 teaspoon ground black pepper*  
*1 teaspoon each dried herbs—parsley, oregano, paprika*  
*1 fresh tablespoon rosemary, finely chopped*  
*3 garlic cloves, crushed*  
*½ cup of red wine, a dry and hearty red wine is ideal. No sweet red wines*  
*2 medium carrots, cut in circles*  
*1 big yellow onion, cut into wedges*  
*2 cups warm beef stock*  
*1 tablespoon unsalted butter*

## Preparation

*\*This is a two-part process.*

### Part 1

1. Season lamb shank with salt, pepper, spices, garlic and rosemary.
2. Pour wine over the lamb shank, cover and let marinate overnight in the refrigerator.

### Part 2

1. The next day remove lamb shank from the refrigerator 30-45 minutes before cooking, until it's at room temperature.

2. Chop carrots and onions.
3. Preheat oven to gas mark 4/350°F/180°C.
4. Pour olive oil into an ovenproof casserole dish and heat up on the stove, medium heat.
5. When the lamb is at room temperature remove it from the marinade and blot dry with a paper towel.
6. Once the olive oil is warm but not smoking sear the lamb on each side until brown, about 3 minutes each side.
7. Remove lamb from casserole and place on a plate or in a bowl.
8. Tip carrots and onions into the casserole and sear on each side, about 4 minutes each side (add a teaspoon of olive oil if needed, then remove carrots and onions from casserole and place on a plate or in a bowl.
9. Put lamb back into the casserole and whatever juices were released into the bowl or plate.
10. Pour wine marinade into the casserole and stir then add carrots and onions and stir.
11. Pour beef stock into the casserole; it should cover the lamb. If it doesn't add warm water until the lamb shank is covered.
12. Cover and bring to a boil.
13. Once at a rolling boil, remove from the stovetop and place in the oven. Turn the oven temperature down to gas mark 1/275°F/140°C. Cook until shank is completely tender, should take about 3 hours; feel free to check at around the 2 hour and 30 minute mark.
14. Remove the casserole immediately from the oven when the lamb is finished; if you leave it in the oven the lamb will continue to cook and dry out.



15. Remove lamb, carrots and onions from casserole and cover with aluminum while making the sauce.
16. Over medium-high heat bring the remaining liquid in the casserole to a boil, reduce heat to a simmer until reduced and thickened about 8-10 minutes. Stir in a tablespoon of unsalted butter. Taste and add salt and pepper if necessary.
17. Serve lamb and its gravy with your side of choice. My personal favorites are rice or creamy mashed potatoes.

# Moroccan-Spiced Rainbow Salad

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## *Ingredients*

*100 grams halloumi cheese, sliced into thick strips*  
*115 grams chickpeas*  
*½ red onion, sliced*  
*2 handfuls fresh spinach*  
*½ avocado, diced*  
*½ tomato, diced*  
*1 cup red cabbage*  
*1 ½ tablespoon olive oil*  
*2 teaspoons mustard*  
*½ teaspoon red wine vinegar*  
*3 teaspoons vegetable oil*  
*1/3 teaspoon Ras-el-hanout seasoning*  
*Salt*  
*Pepper*

## *Preparation*

1. Preheat oven to gas mark 6/400°F/200°C.
2. Toss ½ teaspoon olive oil, chickpeas, onion, Ras-el-hanout, salt and pepper together in an oven-safe pan and roast for 15-20 minutes until the chickpeas and onion are brown and cooked through.
3. In the meantime, make the salad dressing by whisking together the mustard, red wine vinegar and remaining olive oil; adjust taste by adding salt and pepper.
4. Heat vegetable oil in a skillet or pan until hot then add strips of halloumi cheese. Fry each side until it has achieved a very

deep brown color. When completed drain excess oil on plate lined with paper towel.

5. In a large bowl mix the spinach, avocado, tomato and cabbage together.
6. When the chickpea and onion mixture is finished roasting, let it completely cool before adding to the bowl of vegetables.
7. Add dressing to the salad and top with the strips of halloumi.

# *The Green Delight Salad*

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## *Ingredients*

*6 cherry tomatoes cut in half*  
*4 asparagus stalks*  
*1 tablespoon fava beans*  
*2 handfuls arugula*  
*10 grams shaved Parmigiano-Reggiano*  
*½ avocado, diced*  
*½ tablespoon olive oil*  
*3 teaspoons lemon juice*  
*Salt*  
*Black pepper*

## *Preparation*

1. Remove and discard the woody ends of the asparagus then cut the remaining stem in half.
2. Blanch the remaining halves of the asparagus and fava beans by gently lowering them into a pot of boiling salted water for about 2-4 minutes depending on their thickness; the goal is to have tender asparagus.
3. Transfer the asparagus to ice-cold water for a few minutes so that it stops cooking.
4. Drain on paper towel while making the dressing.
5. Using a fork, whisk olive oil and lemon juice together until combined, then add salt and pepper to taste.
6. In a large bowl toss arugula and dressing and top with cherry tomatoes, Parmigiano-Reggiano, avocado, fava beans and asparagus.

# *The Fearless Tarte*

*with* **SHAVED ASPARAGUS AND FENNEL SALAD**

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## **THE TARTE**

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### *Ingredients*

*1 puff pastry (homemade or store-bought, as you want)*

*1 medium-size eggplant*

*1 courgette (zucchini)*

*1 small shallot*

*2 garlic cloves*

*2 eggs*

*½ cup of heavy cream*

*Feta (1 usually use 200 grams)*

*Olive oil*

*Ground black pepper*

*Salt*

*Paprika*

### *Preparation*

1. Cut the courgette and eggplant into semithin circles.
2. Add salt, pepper, paprika and olive oil to the courgette and eggplant and put to the side.
3. Add olive oil to your pan and add thinly chopped shallots and garlic until softened.
4. Once the shallots and garlic are soft, add the courgette first until light brown.
5. Remove the browned courgette from the pan.

6. If needed, add more olive oil to the pan; if no additional oil is needed just start to cook the eggplant until lightly brown like the courgette.
7. Remove the eggplant and let everything cool.
8. While the vegetables are cooling, roll the pastry onto a tarte pan and start to layer the ingredients. I started with the eggplant since the circles were quite big. Then add some crumbled feta and then the courgette and repeat until everything is in the pan.
9. When the veggies and cheese are layered, in a separate bowl mix two eggs and the cream. Add a bit more salt and pepper. Whisk together until everything is blended and the mixture is smooth, then pour over the layered veggies.
10. Pop into the oven at gas mark 4/350°F/177°C for about 20 minutes.

## SHAVED ASPARAGUS *and* FENNEL SALAD

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### *Ingredients*

*5 asparagus stalks*  
*½ fennel bulb*  
*1 fresh lemon*  
*A pinch of lemon zest*  
*Leftover feta*  
*Salt*  
*Ground black pepper*  
*Olive oil*

### *Preparation*

1. Blanch the asparagus by placing them in a pot of boiling water for 2 minutes then immediately transfer to ice-cold

water to stop the cooking. Let it sit in the water for about 1 minute or so until it is fully cooled down then remove and let it dry a bit.

2. While asparagus is cooling, shave the fennel. If you don't know how to do that you can simply cut it lengthwise into medium slices.
3. Once the asparagus is cooled you can start to shave it using a peeler; again, if you don't know how to do that you can just cut it lengthwise into fairly thin slices. I remove the top bits before peeling/cutting because I use it to decorate the dish.
4. Mix the asparagus and fennel together.
5. Sprinkle feta on top.
6. To make the dressing add olive oil, salt, pepper and juice from half of the fresh lemon and the lemon zest to a bowl and aggressively whisk together. Depending on how thick you like your dressing you can add more olive oil. But not too much because you don't want the olive oil taste to overpower the lemon citrusy flavor.
7. Once the dressing is finished drizzle over your salad and toss.

# *Don't Lose Your Softness Pasta*

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## *Ingredients*

*100 grams spaghetti or linguine*

*Salt*

*Black pepper*

*3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil*

*4 garlic cloves, peeled and roughly chopped*

*½ white onion, roughly chopped*

*8 anchovy filets, rinsed and roughly chopped*

*½ teaspoon red pepper flakes, or to taste*

*Parmesan for grating, optional*

*\*I use a lot of anchovies because I love them and believe that one can never have too many anchovies.*

## *Preparation*

1. Put the spaghetti in a large pot of well-salted boiling water and cook until firmly al dente. I would recommend you start checking the pasta's al dente-ness at around 7 minutes. If it is not al dente at 7 minutes, keep checking every 30-50 seconds.
2. While the pasta is cooking, warm the olive oil in a small skillet over medium heat.
3. Add white onions and cook until translucent; they shouldn't be brown.
4. Add the garlic and cook for about 1 minute; it shouldn't be brown.
5. Stir in the all the anchovies, add the red pepper flakes and ground black pepper.
6. Cook until the anchovies are most dissolved. It should take



about 1 minute or so; if the anchovies aren't mostly dissolved but the onion and garlic is beginning to burn, turn down the heat under the skillet.

7. Turn off the heat, but keep the anchovy-garlic-onion goodness in the skillet.
8. Drain the pasta and return it to the pot.
9. Pour the garlic and anchovy mixture into the pot of pasta and toss well to coat.
10. Serve with grated Parmesan, if desired.

# Citrus Fennel Salad

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## Ingredients

### DRESSING

*2 tablespoons olive oil*  
*1 tablespoon red wine vinegar*  
*1 teaspoon lemon*  
*1 garlic clove, finely minced*  
*Salt and pepper, to taste*

### SALAD

*Watercress*  
*1 fennel bulb, cleaned and shaved*  
*1 blood orange, peeled and sliced*  
*1 clementine, peeled and sliced*  
*¼ cup red onion, thinly sliced*  
*¼ cup sliced almonds, toasted*  
*Fresh mint, for garnish*

## Preparation

### DRESSING

1. Place all of the dressing ingredients in a small bowl and stir; taste as you go and adjust accordingly.

### SALAD

2. Sprinkle a tiny bit of salt and pepper and a drizzle of the dressing on the watercress then toss together. You want to season it a little bit before adding the rest.
3. Put watercress on a plate; this will serve as the base for the salad.

4. First layer are the two types of citrus, blood orange and clementines; drizzle with a bit of dressing. Second layer is the shaved fennel.
5. Liberally sprinkle the red onion.
6. Top with the toasted sliced almonds.
7. Spoon the remaining dressing on top and garnish with fresh mint leaves.

# Scallop Macaroni and Cheese

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*\*This recipe is for more than one person. Enjoy the leftovers!*

## *Ingredients*

*250 grams of scallops  
500 grams of elbow macaroni pasta  
1 cup butter  
½ cup all-purpose flour  
1 teaspoon kosher salt  
½ teaspoon freshly cracked black pepper  
½ teaspoon of nutmeg  
½ teaspoon of paprika  
½ teaspoon of garlic powder  
1 ½ cups whole milk  
1 cup of shredded Gruyere  
1 cup of shredded comté  
1 cup of shredded emmental  
1 cup of breadcrumbs*

## *Preparation*

1. Cook macaroni to al dente and put it to the side.
2. Heat ¼ cup of butter in a saucepan; when hot add the scallops.
3. Cook the scallops two minutes on each side then put to the side; they will finish cooking in the oven.
4. Make the roux by melting ½ cup of butter in a saucepan and whisking in the flour.
5. Whisk in the salt, pepper, nutmeg, paprika and garlic powder.

6. Continue stirring for 3-4 minutes until the roux becomes a bit darker in color.
7. Slowly stir in the milk until mixture is thick and creamy; this will take a few more minutes of stirring.
8. Once thick and creamy, add cheeses.
9. Allow the cheese to melt and turn off the heat; *voilà*, you have your cheese sauce.
10. Pour cheese sauce over macaroni; you want the cheese sauce to cover all of the macaroni.
11. Roughly chop the scallops and add to the cheese sauce and macaroni.
12. Transfer to a baking dish.
13. Mix butter and breadcrumbs and sprinkle across the top of the scallop macaroni and cheese mixture.
14. Bake at gas mark 4/350°F/177°C for 20 minutes.
15. Garnish with fresh herbs of your choice.

# Champagne Lavender Cocktail

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*\*Recipe adapted from Martha Stewart*

## *Ingredients*

*½ cup sugar  
1 tablespoon dried lavender  
1 bottle dry champagne, chilled  
Fresh lavender sprigs, for garnish*

## *Preparation*

1. Bring sugar and ½ cup water to a boil in a saucepan, stirring to dissolve sugar.
2. Stir in dried lavender.
3. Remove from heat and let cool completely.
4. Strain out lavender.
5. Refrigerate syrup until ready to serve (you can keep it in the refrigerator for up to one month).
6. When ready to serve, pour about 6 ounces champagne and 1 ½ teaspoons syrup into each flute.
7. Garnish each with a lavender sprig.