

GENIUS KITCHEN

**Over 100 Easy and Delicious Recipes
to Make Your Brain Sharp, Body Strong,
and Taste Buds Happy**

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Photographs by Eric Wolfinger



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POWERFUL PLANTS

Here is a guide to know which kinds of plants to stock your Genius Kitchen with.

AVOID	GOOD	BEST
Refined grain flours. Refined sugar (e.g., cane, date sugar) and sugary syrups (i.e., agave). Ultra-processed “plant-based” foods.	Canned produce. White starchy tubers. Higher sugar fruits (e.g., mango, pineapple). Nut or legume (e.g., bean, lentil) flour-based foods.	Fresh or frozen whole food, low-sugar fruits (e.g., berries, olives, citrus, cacao, avocados), fibrous veggies (e.g., broccoli, cauliflower, spinach), non-white tubers (purple potatoes or sweet potatoes), nuts, seeds, legumes.

MIGHTY MEAT

As you can see, “Meat is bad for the environment!” and “Meat is cruel!” are half-truths. Yes, 97 percent of our beef today comes from CAFO systems, while 3 percent comes from 100 percent grass-fed farms. But to partake in any aspect of modern life means complicity in a complicated web of industrial processes, the consequences of which are not always obvious. My hope is that you challenge the status quo by supporting regenerative farms. And while grass-fed and finished beef and pastured chicken can be more costly, it’s worth it for the environmental and animal welfare, not to mention the benefits to your health. Whatever your budget, here is a continuum to guide your meat purchases.

AVOID	GOOD	BETTER	BEST
Fried or breaded meats. Fast food.	Unprocessed or minimally processed meats.	Pasture-raised. This is a great option for chicken, lamb, and pork.	Organic. 100% grass-fed, grass-finished. Free-range for chicken. Certified humane.

FABULOUS FISH

Know Your Fish	
Tuna	Tuna is a very common genus of fish that encompasses multiple species including yellowfin and albacore. A magnificent and predatory creature, tuna can grow up to 1,500 pounds! It is commonly consumed raw as sashimi, seared, or canned. It's lean (though you can find fatty parts like its prized belly, aka <i>toro</i>) and rich in protein. Avoid bigeye tuna, which contains double the mercury levels of other species of tuna.
Salmon (Atlantic)	Atlantic salmon is usually farmed, since wild Atlantic salmon have become endangered. Farmed salmon can contain higher concentrations of certain environmental toxins like PCBs and even flame retardants. It should be stated that farming practices are improving, with nations like Norway leading the charge, and may provide a solution to overfishing. This is a good option if you can't afford or access wild salmon.
Salmon (Sockeye)	Sockeye salmon is the strongest tasting of the salmons, and it's also the leanest (don't worry, it's still a great source of brain-protecting omega-3 fatty acids). Casual salmon fans might opt for the milder choices below, but aficionados see sockeye as a wonderful, well-priced delicacy. What sets sockeye salmon apart is its high concentration of astaxanthin, the pigment responsible for its deep red color. Astaxanthin is a powerful antioxidant, especially beneficial in keeping your eyes, skin, and brain youthful.
Salmon (Coho)	Coho salmon has medium fat content and is a wonderful option for those who enjoy a moderate-flavored salmon. It's typically lighter in color than sockeye and a great mid-priced option for salmon newbies.
Salmon (King)	King salmon is the most prized of the salmons due to its high fat content and rich, buttery taste. It's also the most expensive. It tends to be lighter in color due to the higher fat content, which also means that it contains less astaxanthin, that powerful antioxidant most concentrated in sockeye.
Sardines	An abundant and sustainably caught staple in Mediterranean cuisine, sardines are small, cold-water fish that are rich in omega-3 fatty acids and minerals like selenium, which protect your brain and support thyroid function. Typically bought canned, look for varieties in water, marinara sauce, or extra-virgin olive oil. I enjoy eating them out of the can or in my Better Brain Bowl.

Cod	Cod is a mild-tasting, low-fat, white-fleshed fish and an excellent source of protein and other nutrients like selenium and vitamin B ₁₂ . I love to order miso-marinated cod in Japanese restaurants, and cod also makes up the national dish of Portugal (bacalao), which my mother used to make for me.
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EPIC EGGS

When it comes to buying eggs, it’s always smart to support farming systems that are kinder to the chickens. As food writer Harold McGee put it in his seminal *On Food and Cooking*, chickens in the food industrial complex have been reduced to “biological machines that never see the sun, scratch in the dust, or have more than an inch or two to move.” Though their eggs are still healthful (yes, all eggs are healthy!), pasture-raised hens are happier *and* lay eggs that are even better for you, indicated by the thickness of their shells and the orange hue of their carotenoid-filled yolks.

GOOD	BETTER	BEST
Conventional.	Organic and/or omega-3 enriched.	Pasture-raised.

Here are some other ways to enjoy your eggs:

Styles of Eggs	
Sunny-side up	Sunny-side up is a method of frying eggs by cracking the eggs directly into a hot pan and not flipping them (which you'd do with over easy), giving the yolk the appearance of the sun. When making sunny-side up eggs, you can cover the pan to hasten cooking (this actually steams the eggs). Make sure the whites are fully cooked, but leave the yolks runny or more custard-like.
Over easy	Over easy is similar to sunny-side up, but you flip the eggs after a few minutes for a nice and even cook on both sides. "Easy" implies the yolk is left runny, whereas "over medium" would be a more well-done egg.
Scrambled	Scrambling is a quick and easy way to both enjoy eggs and combine ingredients that you have around into a substantial meal. Beat the eggs in a mug or bowl. The longer you spend beating, the better. Then place the eggs in a pan (set on low heat) and slowly stir. Remove from the heat just before your desired level of doneness.
Poached	Poaching is one of my favorite ways to cook eggs; they require minimal preparation, no additional fats, and the cleanup is minimal.
Baked	Baking your eggs is a novel and delicious way to enjoy eggs along with other foods. You'll enjoy baked eggs in my "Cheesy" Baked Eggs with Broccoli and Baked Eggs in Sweet Potato "Boats".
Boiled	I've never been a fan of boiled eggs, probably because they're so often overcooked (or cooked too fast) and frequently harbor that infamous "egg" smell. However, if you're making them yourself, it's possible to cook them just right and enjoy a healthy and convenient snack. To cook, place eggs in a pot of water and bring to a boil over high heat. Once boiling, immediately turn off the heat and leave the eggs in the water for 10 to 11 minutes to yield hard-boiled eggs (7 to 8 will yield a softer yolk—also delicious!). Remove and place in ice water for a minute, peel, and enjoy.

FAR-OUT FUNGI

For such a small, tasty, and low-calorie package, mushrooms also pack a surprising nutritional wallop. They are a source of myriad vitamins, fiber, and antioxidants, and contain compounds called beta-glucans, which may help support a healthy immune system. Perhaps that’s why regular consumers of mushrooms have lower risk of both breast cancer and dementia.¹⁵

These are a few of my favorite ’shrooms:

Super 'Shrooms	
Button	These are the most recognizable and easy-to-find mushrooms. They are versatile with a mild flavor and can be eaten cooked or raw. I enjoy sauteing them in extra-virgin olive oil, with some salt, pepper, and garlic powder for a quick and easy side dish that complements meat dishes nicely.
Portobello	These are the largest mushrooms typically found in your local market. Their caps can be a great keto-friendly bun alternative for your favorite burger and are delicious on their own. Try seasoning with a little salt and pepper and extra-virgin olive oil to make a meaty-tasting side dish.
Porcini	Porcini mushrooms have a strong nutty flavor and are commonly used in Italian dishes. What sets them apart is that they contain high levels of natural glutathione, which is an important antioxidant and detoxifier that our bodies also produce.
Nutritional yeast	Though not technically a mushroom, nutritional yeast is a fungi with a sharp, cheese-like flavor. It’s delicious on eggs, in salads, and sprinkled on pastured pork rinds. See it shine in “Pattyless” Jamaican Beef Patty and Vegan Carrot Noodle Mac and “Cheese”.
Lion’s mane	A delicious mushroom that has the texture of cooked crab, lion’s mane promotes the expression of nerve growth factor, or NGF. NGF is important for the growth and survival of our brain cells. They can be hard to find fresh, but it’s worth the hunt.

Cordyceps	These mushrooms may look like little worms, but they are delicious both raw and cooked, with an earthy, sweet flavor. Cordyceps are thought to increase oxygen uptake into cells and therefore can improve energy levels. Some research even suggests they can have a performance-boosting effect. ¹⁶
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FANTASTIC FATS AND OMINOUS OILS

The Ominous Oils	
Soybean oil	Grapeseed oil
Vegetable oil	Safflower oil
Corn oil	Sunflower oil
Canola oil	

DAMN GOOD DAIRY

Dairy We Love	
Butter	Butter is a rich source of vitamin A and vitamin K ₂ . It is made from cream that has been churned. The churning process chemically alters the cream to make the dense and delicious fat we call butter, but this also makes it more prone to raising cholesterol. It comes in salted and unsalted varieties. Ideally purchase butter from 100% grass-fed cows.
Ghee	Ghee is butter that has been clarified. It has a distinct taste and is a perfect cooking fat to make liver in or to use in desserts. As with butter, use in moderation.
Greek yogurt	I love Greek yogurt. Full-fat varieties contain healthful fat-soluble vitamins, but fat-free is a very-low-calorie, high-protein food. It ultimately comes down to your goals. If you're trying to lose weight, opt for fat-free because it will be lower calorie. Always reach for plain, unsweetened varieties, and sweeten with stevia or whole fruit.

Whey protein	I always keep whey protein on hand. A simple protein shake can be a rewarding and satiating snack and can also increase your daily protein intake, which helps support muscle growth and maintenance. Whey protein can also boost the production of glutathione, which is your body's master detoxifier and antioxidant. ²⁸ I prefer vanilla-flavored protein powders because chocolate varieties may harbor higher levels of lead, arsenic, and cadmium, according to a 2010 <i>Consumer Reports</i> study. If dairy sensitive, choose whey protein <i>isolate</i> .
Hard cheeses	Hard cheeses are nutrient-rich and lower in lactose than soft cheeses. They also tend to contain higher levels of vitamin K ₂ and other unique dairy-based nutrients. I don't have a hard-and-fast rule to cheese consumption. . . . If you enjoy and tolerate it, feel free to eat it in moderation!

NEXT-LEVEL NUTS AND NUT MILKS

How should you incorporate nuts? Use them in recipes that naturally limit how many of them you can eat. Since they are so fatty, they go wonderfully on lean fish and chicken dishes, in salads, and in desserts. Coating fish with pistachio nuts or throwing some slivered almonds into a salad may irreversibly uplift your perspective on those two dishes. Nuts also make great gluten-free flour, which can be used to coat chicken tenders or create any number of baked goods. When purchasing nuts, ensure raw or *dry* roasted, as “regular” roasted nuts typically are coated in unhealthy oils. These are a few of my favorites:

Nuts about Nuts	
Almonds	Almonds are incredibly versatile; they're the nut most commonly used in alternative flours and nut milks, and they're easy to snack on. They're rich in vitamin E, magnesium, fiber, and calcium, and their skins have been identified as a potent fuel source for beneficial gut bacteria.

Brazil nuts	Brazil nuts are very calorie dense, containing almost 70 percent oil. In fact, just two nuts can contain the caloric equivalent of one egg. That said, they're tasty and a wonderful source of selenium, with one nut containing roughly double the recommended daily intake. Stick to no more than 3 to 4 per day.
Coconut	Coconut isn't a nut but a fruit and is sweet and unctuous and lends flavor to many cuisines around the globe. It's lower in essential nutrients and higher in saturated fat than any nut, so consume it in moderation, especially if you have genes that might predispose you to heart disease. Coconut oil is rich in medium-chain triglycerides, which may be helpful to those with neurological conditions.
Pistachios	Pistachios are delicious, and their health benefits are unique. They contain more lutein and zeaxanthin than any other nut (helpful to protect your eyes and brain) and are rich in potassium and vitamin B ₆ .
Macadamia nuts	Whereas most nuts are high in polyunsaturated fats, macadamia nuts are abundant in monounsaturated fat, a more chemically stable unsaturated fat. They are also very calorie dense and tend to be the most expensive of all nuts.
Peanuts	Peanuts are not actually nuts but legumes. That said, they're usually found in the nut-butter aisle. They're higher in protein than other nuts but would not be considered a high-protein food because they're still mostly fat by calories (almost 50 percent).

HEROIC HERBS AND SPICES

Time will tell whether spices prove to be a panacea to human health, but in the meantime, here are some of my favorites to keep your kitchen stocked with (I've used many of these in the recipes to come).

Spices to Stock	
Black pepper	Cayenne pepper
Cinnamon	Coriander
Cumin	Garlic
Ginger	Mustard seeds
Paprika	Turmeric

Herbs to Hoard	
Basil	Cilantro
Parsley	Oregano
Rosemary	Mint
Thyme	Sage

STOKED ON SALT

When it comes to stocking your kitchen, you should have three types of salt: fine, coarse (or kosher), and flake, a finishing salt. “But Max, why on Earth do I need three types of salt if they’re all the same thing?” Simple: It’s one of the easiest and most inexpensive ways to elevate your cooking to a restaurant-quality level of sophistication. Below is what you need to know.

Types of Salt	
Fine salt	Fine salt is what most people think of as table salt. It’s the smallest grain, ideal for cooking, recipes, and the saltshaker. It can be precisely measured and dissolves quickly. Keep some in your kitchen and on your table, though you can keep it off your table if you use flake salt (see below), which is what I do.
Coarse salt	Coarse salt, aka kosher salt, is a thicker grain and is perfect for jobs that require a more rugged salt but still require an even consistency. Salting meat prior to cooking is the most classic use-case scenario. This is usually kept in the kitchen and not used at the table.

Flake salt

Flake salt is a finishing salt. You do not cook with it; you simply sprinkle your food with it just before serving. The grains are large and salty and add an irresistible crunch to anything they're sprinkled on. I keep a dish with flake salt on my dining-room table at all times, and even ask for it in restaurants (every good chef uses it, and you can often find it in restaurants if you just ask). It is sublime on all meats, fish, eggs, veggies—literally everything!

VERY AWESOME VINEGAR

The Vinny Gambini

This is a refreshing tonic to lower inflammation, balance blood sugar, provide brain-protecting metabolites, and maybe even help control your appetite. You can enjoy this hot or cold (for a hot drink, just heat the water—but not the vinegar—and omit the ice). Drink on its own or sip with a meal.

Serves 1

1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
1½ teaspoon ground or fresh ginger
¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
2 drops liquid stevia or monk fruit sweetener
¾ cup water
Ice

Combine the vinegar, ginger, cinnamon, stevia, and water in a glass, stir to dissolve the flavorings, and serve over ice.

Here are some of my favorite vinegars and their uses.

Types of Vinegar	
Distilled white vinegar	Though made from fermented grain, white vinegar contains no calories or carbohydrates and is considered gluten-free no matter which grain it comes from. I don't often use it for cooking, though it is my go-to for poaching eggs. It can be added to laundry for an extra sparkle and when diluted makes a wonderful safe home cleaning product.
Apple cider vinegar	Made from the fermentation of apple cider, ACV, as it's popularly referred to, contains beneficial enzymes and polyphenols, which can support gut bacteria. It may also have an appetite-suppressing effect, making it easier to eat less if weight loss is your goal. ³⁶ It's awesome in salad dressings, on roasted veggies, and in beverages. Purchase raw varieties that contain the "mother" (rich in probiotic bacteria) for maximum health benefits.
Balsamic vinegar	Made from fermented grapes, balsamic vinegar is a must in any kitchen. Its slightly sweet flavor comes from a small amount of naturally occurring grape sugar. It also contains trace amounts of resveratrol, a compound studied for its longevity-promoting potential, and 3,3-dimethyl-1-butanol (DMB), which promotes a healthy gut. I love it in salad dressings and to occasionally drizzle on steaks with a hefty shot of extra-virgin olive oil.
Red wine vinegar	Red wine vinegar is a staple in Mediterranean-style cooking. It has a mildly fruity flavor and is at home in any Spanish, Greek, or Italian dish. I particularly like to use it in conjunction with heartier flavors. You'll find it in my Baked Eggs in Sweet Potato "Boats" and Avocado, Fennel, Pomegranate, and Winter Citrus Salad.
Rice vinegar	Rice vinegar is primarily used in Japanese cooking. I like to keep some in my cupboard to add to takeout sushi rice for a little extra kick, and you can also use it to make Japanese sunomono dressing: combine ¼ cup rice vinegar with ½ teaspoon tamari sauce or coconut aminos, 2 tablespoons sugar-free sweetener of choice, and ½ teaspoon salt (delicious to toss sliced cucumbers with!).

RUN TO THE WATER

Get Fizzy Wit' It Sugar-Free Soda

Who doesn't like soda ("pop" for you midwesterners)? The problem is, sugar-sweetened beverages like soda underlie the obesity epidemic along with all of the associated harms that come with being overweight. This is my take on a zero-calorie soda that is delicious and hydrating as well as inexpensive, quick, and easy to make.

Serves 1

1 can (BPA-free) orange-flavored sparkling water

4 to 5 drops vanilla-flavored liquid stevia

Crack open the can of sparkling water and drop in the stevia drops through the mouth hole. Gently swirl, then drink. Feel free to try different flavors of sparkling water—black cherry and coconut are also great!

Here are some of my favorite water-rich foods:

Food	Water content
Cucumber	95%
Watermelon	92%
Bell pepper	92%
Broth	92%
Strawberries	91%
Cantaloupe	90%
Citrus	88%
Yogurt	88%
Beef (cooked)	~60%
Chicken (cooked)	~60%

SUGAR, STARCHES, AND ALTERNATIVE SWEETENERS

The Many Names of Sugar	
Beet sugar	Brown sugar
Cane sugar	Date sugar
Dextrin	Glucose syrup solids
Maltodextrin	Evaporated cane juice
Fruit juice concentrate	Corn syrup
Invert sugar	Malt syrup
Honey	Maple syrup
Molasses	Brown rice syrup

There’s one more downside to sugar: what it does to your teeth. Teeth are crucial to the survival of an animal; a toothless animal is quickly a dead one. Today we’ve come to accept widespread tooth decay as “normal.” Sugar directly feeds bacteria in our mouths that cause cavities and periodontal disease, whether it fits into your personal calorie budget or not. And while sugary drinks may actually be less harmful from this vantage point—liquids don’t linger in the mouth long enough for bacteria to latch on—sugary foods like desserts, candies, and grain flour-based products may be the most offensive as a result of their natural retention between your teeth.³⁹

Refined Grain Products to Avoid	
Bagels	Crackers
Doughnuts	Muffins
Granola bars	Chips
Gravies	Waffles
Pizza	Pancakes
Breads	Cakes
Oatmeal	Wraps
Whole wheat products	Multigrain products

Thankfully there are a slew of sweetener options that don’t add calories or feed disease-causing bacteria in our mouths for us to use as well. While the first noncaloric sweeteners were synthetic and, frankly, didn’t taste very good, today we have many naturally derived sweeteners that not only do not add any calories or sugar to our food but taste great as well. (Some, like erythritol and xylitol, in fact directly support oral health by helping prevent cavity formation.) In my recipes I’ve offered numerous sweet treats using my favorite noncaloric sweeteners.

Here are the types I’ve chosen to use:

Types of Sweeteners	
Monk fruit	Monk fruit has been used medicinally for centuries in Chinese medicine, where it is known as <i>luo han guo</i> . There are some alleged benefits to using monk fruit, including healthier blood sugar control. Monk fruit can have an aftertaste, and for this reason is often combined with erythritol, a sugar alcohol (more on this below). Throughout this book, where a recipe calls for “monk fruit sweetener,” I am using such a blend.
Sugar alcohols	Sugar alcohols are naturally found in many foods and, despite their name, are not sugars, nor will they give you a buzz. The only two sugar alcohols I recommend are xylitol and erythritol, which are very well tolerated by the gut, even in high amounts (many other sugar alcohols can cause uncomfortable GI symptoms). Both bake and taste like sugar, though they can impart a “cooling” effect on the tongue if used in high amounts.
Stevia	Stevia comes from the South American <i>Stevia rebaudiana</i> plant. Safe to use and with no caloric contribution, stevia is great to use in small amounts, but it can have an aftertaste. For this reason, you’ll often find stevia mixed with other sweeteners, like erythritol or allulose (below). I keep vanilla-flavored stevia drops (available at most health food stores) in my kitchen to add to plain Greek yogurt or flavored sparkling water to make a quick and easy zero-calorie soda.
Allulose	Allulose is a newer noncaloric sweetener derived from nature. It is very well tolerated (it won’t upset your stomach) and tastes and feels just like sugar without adding calories. Though more research is needed, early studies indicate a potentially beneficial blood sugar-lowering effect.

12 SHOPPING TIPS FOR A GENIUS KITCHEN

1. Shop the perimeter.

Most supermarkets are laid out in the same way. The perimeters of most supermarkets are where you'll find the fresh produce, meat, seafood, eggs, and dairy. These are the foods that make up the basis of what I cook for myself, and of what I've prepared for you. No shade on aisles; they also contain important ingredients like spices, dried herbs, and vinegars. But for the bulk of your shopping, the perimeter is where the good stuff is.

2. Quality over quantity . . . to a point.

I'm a stickler for quality. I generally prefer to buy higher-quality ingredients than a larger number of discretionary items. For example, I'll usually buy wild salmon over farmed salmon, or grass-finished beef over grain-finished beef. However, if you can't find or afford these "best-case" options, please know that grain-finished beef and farmed fish are still better options for dinner than boxed mac and cheese. Everyone's budget and access are different; your goal should not be perfection but to do the best you can.

3. Buy whole poultry and cheaper cuts.

You'll get the most bang for your buck by buying whole poultry and cheaper cuts of meat. With poultry, you can cut up the bird and freeze what you don't immediately use. With beef, you can slow cook, or simply cut against the grain to tenderize a tougher cut of meat. And don't forget organ meats—these are the supermarket's best kept secret for nutrient density!

4. Don't overspend on organic.

Shopping organic reduces your exposure to synthetic pesticides, but it's not a panacea, particularly if the product in question is just ultra-processed junk with an organic certification slapped onto it. If you can easily afford organic, go for it. If you'd like to be more deliberate with your dollar, a good rule of thumb is: if you eat the entire fruit or the skin or peel (apples or berries, for instance), consider organic. If organic is totally off-limits, make sure to rinse your produce well.

5. Become fluent in “nutritionese.”

Knowing how to read a label is one of the most important things you can do for your health. Ingredient lists are written in descending order of concentration. This means that the first few ingredients are the most abundant in a given food. Be mindful of serving size, the “added sugar” indication (ideally, that number is zero or close to it), and the number of servings in a container. If your food has sugar in the first, second, or third slot, skip it, as that means it has a ton of empty calories.

6. Don’t be duped by marketing.

You’d be surprised to know just how many health claims (either explicit or implied) your average shopper is exposed to. “Organic!” “Low-fat!” “High-protein!” “Heart-healthy!” “Keto!” The truth is, this is marketing for what are often hard-to-resist junk foods. You won’t see health claims on broccoli, avocados, wild salmon, or grass-fed beef, which are among the healthiest foods in the supermarket and adhere to most of these claims anyway! In general, stay away from health claims.

7. The fewer the ingredients, the better.

While the number of ingredients a product claims has no bearing on whether it’s good for you, the quantity of ingredients does correlate to the degree of processing that the “food” has undergone, and as a rule, ultra-processed foods are to be minimized. Real, quality foods do not have extensive ingredient lists; they *are* the ingredients. If the product in question contains more than eight ingredients, in most cases you might consider a different (less-processed) variety instead.

8. Not all processed foods are unhealthy.

I know I like to harp on about the dangers of food processing, but the reality is, food processing isn’t all bad. When you grill, fry, broil, bake, steam, or blend your food, you are in fact processing it! While it’s certainly smart to be wary of the food industry and its many newfangled creations, some processed foods are great: avocado oil-based mayos, sugar-free ketchup, nutritional yeast, pre-sliced turkey breast (nitrite-free), and dark chocolate are just a few of my favorites that I couldn’t live without.

9. Make friends with frozen.

Buying frozen fruits and veggies is a great way to stretch a dollar. Since they are usually frozen at the point of picking, their nutrients are locked in. And because they don't need to be rushed to your supermarket the way fresh produce does (usually by air), frozen produce is more affordable. Grass-fed beef and wild salmon are also popping up in the freezer section at major supermarkets. Don't fear frozen!

10. Shop online.

Today there are many Internet and subscription-based companies that deliver very-high-quality meat products and even better-for-you processed products like grain-free breads through the mail and are often less expensive than what you'd get in a supermarket (and, of course, you can't beat the convenience). New options pop up all the time, so visit my resources website at <http://maxl.ug/GKresources> for the latest suggested vendors and exclusive discounts.

11. Make a list and stick to it.

We all know the dangers of heading to the supermarket and veering off the path of our intent. This is why it can be helpful (and healthful) to make shopping lists before you go. Jot down a list of your nonnegotiables: eggs, unsweetened almond milk, dark chocolate, a pint of blueberries, and a bag of frozen wild salmon are examples of staples that are usually on my list. Make it a goal to think through your list and stick to it.

12. If it's in your shopping cart, it's in your stomach.

Think of your shopping cart as your extended stomach. When considering that bag of greasy chips, throw out the idea that you'll be able to eat them in moderation. (While some people are able to stick to just a handful, many won't.) Visualize the whole bag, in your body, wreaking havoc on your hunger and health, and move on.

DON'T BE A TOOL; USE THE *RIGHT* TOOLS

Utensils for a Genius Kitchen	
Spoon	Instant-read thermometer
Slotted spoon	Measuring cups
Spatula	Measuring spoons
Tongs	Cast-iron pan
Cutting board	Knife set

12 GENIUS COOKING TIPS

1. Read your recipes in their entirety first!

Ever make it halfway through a recipe only to realize you've neglected to pick up a necessary ingredient? I've done it! The solution: don't be hasty. Read through the entire recipe first so that there are no surprises.

2. Have patience.

In today's on-demand world, we want our food quickly, and still expect it always to be delicious. The art of low and slow cooking has become a relic. Some dishes require time; for example, my Insanely Crispy Gluten-Free Buffalo Chicken Wings, Perfect Ribs, or Bone Broth Beef Stew with Purple Sweet Potatoes. Some meats (tough cuts in particular) truly shine only when cooked low and slow, when the connective tissue has been given time to melt away. Many veggies need time to caramelize. Don't rush the process.

3. Thaw plastic-wrapped foods in the fridge or cold water.

Utilizing frozen foods is a great way to minimize food waste and cut down on grocery costs. Ideally, you'd like to thaw foods in the refrigerator overnight, but for more immediate use, place the item in cold water. The water will still thaw the food, but by avoiding putting plastic-wrapped foods in hot water, you minimize the chances of transferring potentially harmful plastic chemicals into your food.

4. Don't overuse fats and oils.

I'm a proponent of using the right fats and oils for optimal health, but there is still a limit to how much can be used before the calories start adding up! Use as much as you need to cook, but no more. Some foods don't even need added fat in the pan, like when cooking a burger patty, since ground beef already has plenty of fat of its own. When using fats like extra-virgin olive oil or butter as a dressing or spread, the amount to use depends on your goals; I like to stick to a one- to two-tablespoon cap on added fat as a general rule of thumb.

5. Clean as you go.

Cooking is fun, but the prospect of cleanup can be agonizing unless you do

it as you go. Thankfully, not much effort is involved. In between recipe steps, throw out scraps, wipe down your countertops with a towel (paper or cloth), and soak pots and pans before the food dries and becomes caked on. It'll save you a headache later.

6. Preheat!

Make sure your oven is fully preheated. The reason for this is simple—if you allow your oven to heat up with your food in it, it could lead to uneven cooking. Same goes for pans. Plus, when your pan is hot, your food is less likely to stick. And a hot pan will give you that delicious sear you're looking for, whereas a tepid pan will overcook your food before you get to the sear you want.

7. Master the art of salting.

I loathe bland food. So do most chefs. In fact, ask any chef what the biggest mistake most home cooks make is and they'll likely answer: undersalting. While it's true that it's safer to undersalt than to oversalt (you can't remove salt once added, but you can always add it later), mastering the salting process is crucial to making flavors pop. Don't feel guilty about salting your food to make it delicious—seriously! Even sweet foods need a little bit of salt to shine. Keep in mind that sauces like coconut aminos, tamari and fish sauce, prepared broths, and canned foods generally will add plenty of salt on their own, so adjust your seasoning accordingly.

8. Taste often!

There are no points to be won by not tasting your food until it's done. Eliminate the guesswork by tasting your food and tasting frequently, through every step (except, of course, if unsafe to do so). This is how all chefs cook, and it allows you to learn how flavors (and textures!) develop over time.

9. Learn how to properly use a knife.

As someone who's largely self-taught, I'm still mastering this one. Learning how to properly use a knife is key to being efficient in the kitchen while also preventing bloodshed. When cutting or chopping, always hold the item with your fingers pointed down, nails parallel to the blade, so that you can't inad-

vertently slice them. For a visual guide, you can always head to YouTube and search for “basic knife skills.”

10. Enjoy yourself.

Cooking should first and foremost be fun. It’s sort of like karaoke: whether you’re a terrible singer or a budding pop star, if you’re not having fun with the mic, no one’s having fun watching you. Same with cooking; whether your meal turns out divine or disgusting, as long as you’ve had fun and have kept a positive attitude about it, your dinner dates will laugh along with you.

11. Cook with friends.

One of my favorite things to do is to cook with friends. Don’t get me wrong, I love cooking for my brothers, but . . . they’re my brothers. Inviting friends over deepens social bonds while offering your comrades a powerful gift: food. Humans have been bonding over food for millennia, and we’re not stopping anytime soon. Make cooking a collaborative process by delegating parts of the recipes you’re following.

12. Play music while you cook and serve.

Jean-Michel Basquiat said, “Art is how we decorate space, music is how we decorate time.” Have music that you like to play while you’re cooking, serving, and eating. It elevates the experience, adds a rhythm to your activities, and lifts the mood. While eating, aim for music that calms you to encourage the “rest and digest” state—save the hard rock for your workouts. Me? I love to play anything from French jazz to mellow electronic music.



RECIPES FOR A GENIUS LIFE



CHAPTER 3

BREAKING THE FAST

Whether you're an early or late riser, the following recipes are perfect for your first meal. My intent in creating them was to delight your palate and wake you up while providing ample satiety and protein to keep you feeling strong all day long.

The World's Best Blueberry Smoothie That Actually Tastes Like Blueberries

I am almost always let down by blueberry smoothies, as they rarely taste like their namesake. That's why I've done things a little differently by leaving out the overpowering ingredients (e.g., banana) and playing up the tanginess of the blueberries with citrus and a little nondairy yogurt. I think you'll find the results berry, berry delicious. Consume as is, or add a scoop of vanilla-flavored whey protein isolate.

Serves 1

1 cup frozen blueberries
1/2 avocado, flesh scooped out
1/2 small tangerine, peeled and segmented
1 cup plain unsweetened coconut yogurt*

Zest of 1/2 lemon
1 tablespoon ground flaxseeds
Coconut milk or water, as needed

* If you enjoy dairy, you can substitute plain dairy Greek yogurt for added protein.



In a blender, pulse the blueberries, avocado, tangerine, yogurt, and lemon zest until combined (it'll be thick). Add the flaxseeds and, with blender running, drizzle in coconut milk, a little at a time, until you've reached the consistency you prefer. Serve immediately.

Beef Breakfast Sausage Patties

If you're someone who likes sausage for breakfast (or sausage gravy, for that matter), this is a healthy twist on the preservative-laden classic many of us have become used to. And yes—you can use this sausage mix as a base for gravy for a Sunday-morning treat.

Serves 4

1 pound ground beef
1 tablespoon rubbed sage
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon onion powder

1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 teaspoon paprika
1 teaspoon monk fruit sweetener

With clean hands, crumble the beef into a large bowl. Add the remaining ingredients and work them in until fully incorporated.

Fill a small bowl with water. Shape the meat mixture into 8 1/2-inch patties, wetting your hands in between patties (it's easier to shape them with wet hands).

Heat a skillet over medium-high heat and, working in batches, add the patties and cook for 2 to 3 minutes per side, until nicely browned on both sides and 140–150 degrees in the middle.

If you're not cooking the patties right away, you can freeze them. Store in the freezer for up to 3 months, and cook from frozen for 3 to 4 minutes per side.

Grain-Free Blueberry Orange Pancakes with Coconut Cream

There's a reason blueberry pancakes are a brunch staple—it's because they're so satisfying. I find the addition of orange zest and a tiny bit of cinnamon makes the pancakes taste almost like blueberry pie.

Serves 4

5 large eggs	1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 cup full-fat canned coconut milk, plus more as needed	Coconut oil, ghee, or avocado oil, for cooking
Zest and juice of 1/2 orange	1 cup fresh blueberries
1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract	1 (13.66-ounce) can unsweetened coconut cream, refrigerated for 24 hours
2 tablespoons monk fruit sweetener	1 tablespoon powdered Swerve (optional)
2/3 cup cassava flour (Otto's is a popular brand)*	1 tablespoon hemp hearts (optional)
1/3 cup coconut flour	
1/4 cup almond flour	*If you can't find cassava flour, add an extra 1/2 cup almond flour and 2 extra tablespoons coconut flour for a similar flavor.
3/4 teaspoon baking powder	
1 pinch salt	

Chill a metal mixing bowl or the bowl of your stand mixer in the fridge.

In a blender or a large bowl, blend or whisk the eggs, coconut milk, orange zest and juice, the vanilla, and monk fruit until smooth.

In a small bowl, whisk together the cassava, coconut, and almond flours, the baking powder, salt, and cinnamon.

Add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients in the blender or bowl and blend or whisk until smooth. If the mixture looks dry, add coconut milk 1 tablespoon at a time until you have a traditional pancake batter consistency.

Preheat the oven to 200°F.

Heat a large skillet over medium heat. Add 1 tablespoon oil. Pour 1/4-cup portions of batter onto the skillet, leaving space for the pancakes to expand, and sprinkle each pancake with blueberries.

Cook for 3 to 4 minutes, then flip and cook for an additional 3 to 4 minutes, until pancakes are golden brown on each side, and no raw batter shows when pierced in

the center with a sharp knife. As the pancakes are cooked, transfer them to a sheet pan in the oven to keep warm.

When all the pancakes are cooked, open the chilled can of coconut cream and scoop the thick cream off the top of the can into the chilled bowl. Add the Swerve and whip with an electric mixer for 3 to 5 minutes, until fluffy. Place the pancakes on plates and serve with the whipped coconut cream and sprinkle hemp hearts over the top.





“Cheesy” Baked Eggs with Broccoli

There’s something so classic about the combination of broccoli and cheese—and if you’re big on a cheesy broccoli quiche for breakfast, this dairy-free recipe is perfect for you. It’s a great brunch on its own or served with a side of salmon skin “bacon” .

Serves 4

3 tablespoons avocado oil, divided	2 tablespoons unsweetened coconut cream, divided
2 cups 1/4–1/2 inch broccoli florets (1/2 large head)	Zest and juice of 1 lemon
1 teaspoon salt	4 eggs
3 tablespoons nutritional yeast, divided	Hot sauce (optional)

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Use 1 tablespoon of avocado oil to lightly oil four 4-ounce oven-safe ramekins.

Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add remaining 2 tablespoons of the oil, the broccoli, and salt and cook until the broccoli is tender at the very edges. Add 2 tablespoons of the nutritional yeast, 1 tablespoon coconut cream, and the lemon zest and juice. Cook, stirring, until well combined and the broccoli is vibrant green, tender at the edges but still firm.

Remove from the heat, divide the broccoli among the prepared ramekins, and crack an egg over each.

In a small bowl, whisk together the remaining 1 tablespoon nutritional yeast and 1 tablespoon coconut cream and pour it over the eggs. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, until eggs are set to your liking. Serve with hot sauce.



Herb and Avocado Scrambled Eggs

Scrambled eggs with herbs is a classic for a reason—and this simple scramble takes it over the top by keeping the eggs light and creamy and cheesy-tasting without being loaded with dairy. It's perfect for a quick weekend breakfast (or as part of a hearty brunch), and even better with my Olive Oil–Poached Salmon.

Serves 2

4 eggs	1 shallot, minced
2 tablespoons minced fresh dill	1 jalapeño, minced (omit if your tastes run mild)
2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley	1/2 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons minced fresh cilantro	1 avocado, diced
3 tablespoons nutritional yeast	1/4 cup minced fresh basil
1 tablespoon unsweetened coconut cream	
2 tablespoons avocado oil	

In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs, dill, parsley, cilantro, nutritional yeast, and coconut cream.

In a small skillet, heat the oil over low heat. Add the shallot, jalapeño, and salt and cook until the vegetables are fragrant and tender, about 5 minutes. Add the eggs and continue to cook, stirring frequently, until the eggs are creamy and just beginning to set, about 7 minutes.

Fold in the avocado, cook until the eggs are set to your liking, then fold in the basil and serve.

Olive Oil–Poached Salmon “Benedict”

When I’ve got time to make a big brunch in the morning, there’s nothing better than a benedict. While I’m down with the occasional Canadian bacon, I wanted to see what would happen if I replaced it with something even better for you—olive oil–poached salmon. And I’ve nixed the English muffins in favor of nutrient-dense (and damn delicious) hash brown–style sweet potato cakes.

Serves 2

1 cup shredded sweet potato

1 tablespoon tapioca starch

½ teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon minced fresh rosemary

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided

4 (2-ounce) slices Olive Oil–Poached Salmon

2 eggs

1 recipe Easy Olive Oil Hollandaise (recipe follows)

Minced fresh dill

In a medium bowl, toss together the sweet potatoes, tapioca starch, salt, and rosemary.

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in an oven-safe skillet over medium-high heat.

Shape the sweet potato mixture into 2 English muffin–sized cakes and place in the skillet.

Cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until golden brown on the bottom, then remove from the heat.

Put the salmon on top of the sweet potato in an even layer, then carefully crack an egg on top of each and drizzle with the remaining 1 tablespoon oil.

Transfer to the oven and bake until the whites are set, 8 to 10 minutes (this is the perfect time to make your hollandaise). Transfer each “benedict” to a serving platter and drizzle with hollandaise. Top with dill and serve.

Easy Olive Oil Hollandaise

Serves 2

1/3 cup mild-tasting extra-virgin olive oil	1 teaspoon paprika
1 egg yolk	Juice of 1/2 lemon
2 tablespoons warm water, divided	1 pinch salt

In a small saucepan, gently heat the oil to 120°F. Remove from the heat.

In a blender, combine the egg yolk, 1 tablespoon of the warm water, the paprika, lemon juice, and salt and blend until smooth.

With the blender running, slowly stream the oil into the mixture through the hole in the lid—it will thicken up pretty quickly. If it's too thick, thin with additional water.

Serve over Olive Oil–Poached Salmon “Benedict” or with grilled asparagus for an easy side dish.

Perfect Poached Eggs

Knowing how to poach an egg is a skill that—like playing guitar or practicing yoga—you’re likely to appreciate having at least a few times in life. It involves gently cooking a cracked egg in hot water. The beautiful thing about egg poaching is that it requires no added oil and gives your eggs a delicious taste and texture. When done right, the yolk stays nice and custard-like, maintaining all its healthy fats. And the whites take on a slightly acidic flavor from the vinegar, which complements any dish it accompanies. I often top these with a dash of flake salt and eat with smoked salmon. This recipe is for one serving, but you can batch cook as many as you like using the same water.

Serves 1

2 eggs

2 tablespoons distilled white vinegar

Fill a medium-sized, straight-sided saucepan with 4 to 5 inches of water, enough to cover the eggs completely. Add the vinegar and bring to a boil, then dial the heat down to maintain a very low simmer.

Crack one egg into a shallow bowl, being careful not to break the yolk.

Once the water has calmed down, gently slide the egg into the water. It helps if you put the edge of the bowl into the water. Repeat for the second egg. Set a timer for 4 minutes and 15 seconds.

When the timer goes off, using a slotted spoon, remove the eggs from the water, again being careful not to break the yolks. Gently pat the eggs with a paper towel before serving.

Crispy Salmon Skin “Bacon” and Eggs

Whenever I make a recipe that calls for skin-off salmon, I buy skin-on and save the fat and collagen-rich skin to make a healthier “bacon.” Just store it in your freezer and let it thaw completely before using. You can use salmon skin “bacon” anywhere bacon is called for (on top of a salad is one great place). If you like a smokier bacon, try adding a drop or two—no more—of liquid smoke to the marinade.

Serves 2

1/4 cup coconut aminos	2 tablespoons avocado oil or melted ghee, divided
1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice	1 shallot or 1/4 red onion, minced
1 teaspoon monk fruit sweetener	4 eggs
Skin from 4 salmon fillets (save the flesh for another recipe)	1/4 cup minced fresh dill
	1/2 teaspoon salt, or to taste
	2 tablespoons sesame seeds

In a small saucepan, combine the coconut aminos, lemon juice, and monk fruit. Cook over medium-low heat for 3 to 5 minutes, until the monk fruit dissolves. Let cool to room temperature, then pour into in a sealable dish. Add the salmon skins, submerging them completely. Let rest in the refrigerator for at least 3 hours (or as long as overnight). Remove from the refrigerator 30 minutes to 1 hour before cooking.

Preheat the oven to 275°F. Line a sheet pan with parchment paper and brush with 1 tablespoon of the oil.

Carefully dry the salmon of any excess marinade and lay the salmon skins flat on the sheet pan in a single layer.

Bake for 40 minutes to 1 hour, checking every 10 minutes to make sure the sweetener doesn’t burn, until the skin looks crisp and dry. Remove from the oven.

While salmon is baking, heat the remaining 1 tablespoon oil in a small skillet over medium-high heat. Add the shallot and cook, stirring occasionally, for 2 to 3 minutes, until tender.

Meanwhile, in a large bowl, whisk the eggs with the dill and salt.

Add the egg mixture to the pan and cook, stirring frequently, until the eggs have reached your desired level of scramble. Sprinkle with the sesame seeds and serve with the salmon skin “bacon.”

Baked Eggs in Sweet Potato “Boats” with Herb Relish

One of my favorite places to eat in LA is the hot bar at a natural foods store called Erewhon. For breakfast, they serve a fried egg and sweet potato dish that inspired this one. This recipe is a great way to use up extra sweet potatoes—I often like to bake a few at the start of the week and keep them in the fridge just for this recipe. The herbs and capers brighten up the richness of the eggs, and the raisins add a surprising zing.

Serves 4

2 medium-large fully baked sweet potatoes	2 tablespoons capers
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil	2 tablespoons raisins, roughly chopped
4 eggs	1 small shallot, minced
1½ teaspoon salt	Juice of 1 lemon
¼ cup minced fresh parsley	About 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
¼ cup minced fresh cilantro	

Preheat the oven to 375°F.

Slice each baked sweet potato in half lengthwise and scoop out enough of each inside to make room for an egg. Brush with the oil inside and out.

Arrange the sweet potatoes in an baking dish and crack an egg into the hollow created in each sweet potato. Sprinkle with the salt, then transfer to the oven. Bake for 8 to 10 minutes, until the eggs are set to your liking.

Meanwhile, make a relish by combining the parsley, cilantro, capers, raisins, shallot, and lemon juice in a small bowl. Taste and add vinegar a little at a time until just tangy enough for your taste buds.

Serve each egg “boat” topped with relish.





CHAPTER 4

SMALL BITES

These dishes are delicious sides or, paired with a protein, main courses. They're also wonderful for parties or to bring to potlucks. The focus in these dishes (aside from teasing your taste buds) is to provide your body with important phytochemicals that strengthen you from the inside out.

Grain-Free Greens Fritters with Avocado Dipping Sauce

We've all been there: you bought more produce than you could comfortably eat within a given period, and you're worried it's going to go bad. Whenever I end up with a surplus of greens, I turn them into fritters—it's also a great way to use up any slightly wilted greens that you don't want to waste but don't want to eat raw. These crispy, salty, flavorful fritters are balanced perfectly by a tangy, creamy, avocado-based sauce.

Serves 4

1 cup baby spinach leaves, roughly chopped and packed	1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
1 cup fresh kale leaves, roughly chopped and packed	1 egg
1 cup chard leaves, roughly chopped and packed	4 tablespoons cassava flour, plus more as needed
1 teaspoon salt, divided, plus more as needed	2 ripe avocados, flesh scooped out
1 small shallot, very finely chopped	Juice of 1 lemon
1 clove garlic, minced	1/4 cup fresh parsley, chopped
1 teaspoon ground black pepper	1/4 cup fresh dill, chopped
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin	1 tablespoon sesame oil
1/2 teaspoon paprika	Dash of coconut aminos or tamari
	3 tablespoons avocado oil

In a food processor (or by hand with a very sharp knife), pulse the spinach, kale, and chard until very finely chopped. Remove from the food processor and sprinkle lightly with 1/2 teaspoon salt. Let rest for 10 minutes, then place between paper towels and squeeze to wring out excess moisture (you can also do this with a cloth towel, but be aware that it may stain).

Transfer the wrung-out greens to a large bowl and add the shallot, garlic, black pepper, cumin, paprika, oregano, egg, and 2 tablespoons of the cassava flour. Mix to combine, then test if the mixture will form nice fritters that hold together when squeezed. If it's too dry, add a small splash of water. If it's too wet, add cassava flour, a couple teaspoons at a time, until the mixture binds nicely.

Using your hands or an ice cream scoop, shape the mixture into 8 to 10 small balls. Flatten slightly, so they're somewhere between a ball and a patty shape. Place on a plate or sheet pan and chill in the freezer for 5 to 10 minutes or in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes or up to overnight.

While the fritters are chilling, make the sauce: in a food processor or blender, combine the avocados, lemon juice, parsley, dill, sesame oil, and coconut aminos and process until smooth. Transfer to a serving bowl and cover the surface with plastic wrap to prevent browning. Chill until ready to serve.

Heat the avocado oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Carefully place the fritters in the skillet, spacing them evenly, and cook for 3 to 5 minutes, until the bottom side is golden brown. Flip, reduce the heat to low, and cook for an additional 5 to 7 minutes, keeping a close eye, until the bottoms brown nicely but don't burn and the fritters are cooked all the way through. Remove from the heat, sprinkle with the remaining salt, and serve with the avocado sauce.





Romaine and Broccoli with Sesame Caesar Dressing

I love a classic Caesar dressing—and this sesame-heavy twist omits the cheese in favor of creamy, nutty tahini for a dairy-free but equally creamy dressing. Raw broccoli adds a bit of sweetness, and the hemp hearts—aside from lending some additional protein—are perfect for a bit of crunch. Enjoy as is, or add a piece of grilled fish, chicken, or shrimp for a hearty meal.

Serves 2 to 4

1 head broccoli, with stalk	1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
1 heart romaine lettuce, limp outer leaves removed	¼ cup tahini (sesame seed paste)
3 tablespoons hulled hemp hearts	Juice of ½ lemon
3 tablespoons toasted sesame seeds	1 small clove garlic, peeled
½ teaspoon salt	1 dash coconut aminos or tamari
1 teaspoon ground black pepper	1 oil-packed anchovy fillet (optional but delicious—and not at all fishy!)
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil	

To prepare the broccoli, trim the woody ends off the stalk and peel the stem. Chop the stalk into small matchsticks and set aside. Chop the remaining broccoli into very small florets. Tear or slice the lettuce into bite-sized pieces.

In a large bowl, toss the prepared broccoli with the lettuce and set aside.

In a small bowl, combine the hemp hearts, sesame seeds, salt, and black pepper. Sprinkle over the salad.

In a blender, combine the oil, mustard, tahini, lemon juice, garlic, coconut aminos, and anchovy, if using (try it once—SO worth it!). Toss with the greens and serve.

Watercress, Avocado, and Grilled Fruit Salad with Toasted Almond Dressing

Tangy citrus and creamy avocado are perfect partners in salad—and the addition of tropical fruit balances out the peppery bite of watercress. I’ve used walnut oil, made by simply pressing walnuts, as a finishing oil in this salad. If you don’t have walnut oil, that’s okay—use sesame or olive oil instead for a slightly different but equally delicious flavor.

Serves 4

Extra-virgin olive or avocado oil	2 avocados, sliced
1 medium-ripe mango, pitted, peeled, and sliced 1-inch thick	1 small red onion, minced
1 peach, pitted and sliced 1-inch thick	½ cup toasted almonds
¼ pineapple, peeled and sliced 1-inch thick	2 cloves garlic, peeled
1 grapefruit, peel on, cut into 1-inch-thick slices	2 tablespoons walnut oil
¼ cup minced fresh mint	Juice of ½ lemon
4 cups watercress	1 teaspoon red wine vinegar
	1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves

Heat a grill (or a large skillet) to medium-high and brush the surface with olive or avocado oil.

Grill (or sear in the pan) the mango, peach, pineapple, and grapefruit until lightly charred on the outside, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Remove from the heat and let cool to room temperature. Chop into bite-sized pieces, place in a large bowl, and toss with the mint.

Arrange the watercress on a large platter or in a big bowl. Top with the avocados, onion, and grilled fruit.

To make the dressing: In a food processor, combine the almonds, garlic, walnut oil, lemon juice, vinegar, and thyme and process until smooth and creamy. Thin with water to create a pourable texture if needed. Drizzle the dressing over the salad and serve.





Baked Almond “Breaded” Artichoke Hearts with Herb and Kale Pesto

Who doesn’t enjoy breaded, fried foods, right? Well, this delicious “breaded” artichoke dish isn’t fried . . . and it’s not covered in bread crumbs. And yet somehow it still tastes like junk food, in the best possible way. It’s spicy, salty, and crispy—perfect for dipping into a garlicky pesto. Be sure to keep extra napkins around!

Serves 4

4 cups frozen quartered artichoke hearts, thawed	1 teaspoon garlic powder
¼ cup tapioca starch	2 tablespoons avocado oil
2 eggs	1½ cups shredded kale leaves
¼ cup full-fat canned coconut milk	½ cup fresh basil, roughly chopped
1 generous dash of your favorite hot sauce	½ cup fresh parsley, roughly chopped
2 cups almond flour	½ cup whole toasted almonds
1½ cups nutritional yeast, divided	2 cloves garlic, peeled
1 teaspoon paprika	1½ teaspoons salt, divided
	¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

Preheat the oven to 425°F. Line a sheet pan with parchment paper, brush the paper with oil, and set aside.

Place the artichoke hearts and tapioca starch in a large bowl with a cover or a zip-top bag and shake until the artichoke hearts are well-coated.

In a separate bowl, whisk together the eggs, coconut milk, and hot sauce.

In an additional bowl or shallow dish, stir together the almond flour, ½ cup of the nutritional yeast, the paprika, and the garlic powder.

Carefully dip the artichoke hearts into the egg mixture, then into the almond mixture, and arrange on the prepared sheet pan in a single layer. Drizzle with the avocado oil, then transfer to the oven and bake for 10 to 15 minutes, turning occasionally so as not to burn the artichokes, until golden brown.

While artichokes are baking, make the pesto: In a food processor fitted with an “S” blade, pulse together the kale, basil, parsley, toasted almonds, and garlic cloves until a crumbly mixture forms. Add the remaining 1 cup nutritional yeast and ½ teaspoon of the salt. With the machine running, stream the olive oil into the food processor until well combined. If you like a thinner pesto, add a little more oil. Sprinkle the artichoke hearts with the remaining salt immediately before serving and serve with the dipping sauce.

Miso Coconut Simmered Veggies

This hearty braised veggie dish features affordable, easy-to-find vegetables, savory miso, and plenty of ginger to add sweetness and bite. Braising in coconut milk rather than broth balances out the bitter bite most greens have, making this dish accessible to most peoples' palates.

Serves 4

2 tablespoons sesame oil	2 tablespoons red or white miso paste (red preferred)
1 medium red onion, thinly sliced	1 (15-ounce) can full-fat unsweetened coconut milk
1 3-inch-diameter turnip, peeled and cut into bite-sized pieces	1 teaspoon coconut aminos, plus more as needed
2 carrots, peeled and cut into bite-sized pieces	1 tablespoon rice vinegar
1 parsnip, peeled and cut into bite-sized pieces	1/2 small head of napa cabbage, roughly chopped
1 zucchini, cut into rounds	1 bunch collard greens, stems removed, leaves thinly sliced
2 tablespoons minced fresh ginger	

Heat the oil in a large, heavy-bottomed soup pot over medium-high heat.

Add the onion, turnip, carrots, parsnip, and zucchini and cook until the onion is tender and translucent, 5 to 7 minutes. Add the ginger and miso paste and cook until the ginger is fragrant and the miso paste is broken up throughout the dish, 2 to 3 minutes. Pour the coconut milk, coconut aminos, and vinegar into the pot, bring to a simmer, then reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes, until all the veggies are tender.

Add the cabbage and collard greens and cook uncovered for an additional 7 to 10 minutes, until the greens are wilted. Taste, add more coconut aminos as needed, and serve.

Lemon, Lentil, and Broccoli Soup with Apricots and Pomegranate

When I was growing up, my mom used to make a lentil soup like this one, and I just loved the dried apricots—they added sweetness and freshness to a meaty-tasting soup and really woke up my taste buds. I've updated this soup by adding broccoli along with pomegranate seeds and cilantro for an added punch of fresh-tasting flavor.

Serves 4

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil	6 cups chicken bone broth or vegetable broth, divided
Zest and juice of 2 lemons	4 cups bite-sized broccoli florets (1 head)
1 medium-sized yellow onion, minced	1 cup minced dried unsweetened apricots
3 cloves garlic, minced	1 cup pomegranate arils
1 teaspoon ground cumin	¼ cup minced fresh cilantro
½ teaspoon red chile flakes	
1 cup dried red lentils	

Heat the oil in a large soup pot over medium-high heat. Add the lemon zest (save the juice for later), onion, garlic, cumin, and red chile flakes and cook until the onion is translucent and softened, 3 to 5 minutes.

Add the lentils and 3 cups of the broth and bring to a simmer. Lower the heat to medium-low, cover, and cook for 30 to 45 minutes, until the lentils start to fall apart and become creamy. You can help the process along by gently crushing them with the back of a fork.

Whisk in the remaining broth along with the broccoli and dried apricots. Raise the heat briefly, bring to a simmer, then reduce the heat to medium-low and cook uncovered for 10 to 15 minutes, until the broccoli is tender. Remove from the heat, add the lemon juice, pomegranate arils, and cilantro, and serve.

Vegan Carrot Noodle Mac and “Cheese”

I grew up loving boxed mac and cheese, which is delicious to a young palate but anything but a health food. Thankfully, creating a version that is equally indulgent isn't that difficult. If you've ever craved mac and cheese, this nut-based recipe will hit the spot . . . and for children, too! It's so delicious that most people won't miss the dairy. The “cheese” sauce is also great tossed over roasted broccoli (sorry, I just drooled all over my keyboard).

Serves 4

1/2 cup raw macadamia nuts, soaked in water for at least 8 hours or overnight	1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika
1/2 cup toasted pine nuts, soaked in water for at least 8 hours or overnight	1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
3/4 cup full-fat canned coconut milk	1 clove garlic, peeled
Juice of 1/2 lemon, plus more as needed	1 pinch ground black pepper
1/2 cup nutritional yeast, plus more as needed	4 cups carrot “noodles” from 4 large carrots
1 1/2 teaspoons salt, divided, plus more as needed	2 tablespoons avocado oil
	1 medium red onion, thinly sliced
	1 teaspoon red chile flakes

Drain the nuts of their soaking water.

In a food processor fitted with an “S” blade, combine the macadamia nuts and pine nuts, the coconut milk, and lemon juice and process until mostly smooth, scraping down the sides occasionally (this can take a few minutes). Add the nutritional yeast, 3/4 teaspoon of the salt, the paprika, mustard, garlic, and black pepper and process until smooth. Taste and adjust the salt, nutritional yeast, and lemon juice to your desired level of “cheesiness.”

Preheat the oven to 400°F.

In a large bowl, toss the carrot noodles with a 1/4 teaspoon of salt. Let rest for 5 minutes, then pat dry with paper towels.

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the carrot noodles, onion, remaining salt, and chile flakes and cook for 3 to 5 minutes, until the onion is tender.

Toss in the “cheese” sauce, then transfer to an oven-safe baking dish. Bake for 10 to 15 minutes, until bubbly, then serve.





Shrimp, Blueberry, and Arugula Salad

You'll notice quite a few chopped salads in this book—because, in my opinion, they're one of the best lunches for busy days, filling you up and checking off numerous nutritional boxes. When made with a heartier green, like arugula, you can make this salad in the morning (or even the night before) and have it stay perfectly fresh and crisp for lunch the next day.

Serves 4

1 lemon, thinly sliced (peel on)	1 small red onion, thinly sliced
3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced	2 cups fresh blueberries
1 tablespoon whole black peppercorns	1 small English cucumber, peeled and thinly sliced
1 teaspoon red chile flakes	Juice of 1 lemon
1½ teaspoons salt, divided	¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
1½ cups water	2 tablespoons rice vinegar
1 pound peeled, deveined shrimp (tail-on is OK)	1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
4 cups arugula	2 avocados, thinly sliced

In a large saucepan, combine the lemon, garlic, peppercorns, chile flakes, ¾ teaspoon of the salt, and the water. Place over medium-low heat and bring to a simmer. Add the shrimp and cook for 5 to 6 minutes, until the shrimp is just cooked through. Remove the shrimp from the water (discard the seasonings) and immediately rinse in ice-cold water to prevent overcooking. Pat the shrimp dry with a paper towel.

In a large bowl, toss together the arugula, onion, blueberries, and cucumber. In a small bowl, whisk together lemon juice, oil, vinegar, and mustard until emulsified. Toss with the arugula mixture, top the salad with the shrimp and avocados, and serve.

Zucchini Noodles with Olive Oil, Garlic, and Chile Flakes

Sometimes simple dishes are best—and this ultra-simple, six-ingredient zucchini one is no exception. All that zucchini needed was plenty of good-quality olive oil, garlic, and pine nuts to go from simple to the star of your table. Try tossing in some Olive Oil–Poached Salmon to take it over the top.

Serves 4

5 cups zucchini noodles (about 3–4 large zucchini, spiralized or cut into thin, spaghetti-sized strips)
1½ teaspoons salt, divided

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
6 to 8 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
1 teaspoon red chile flakes
¼ cup toasted pine nuts



In a large bowl, toss the noodles with ¾ teaspoon of the salt.

In a large saute pan, heat the oil and garlic over medium heat for 2 to 3 minutes, until the garlic is very light golden brown. With a slotted spoon, remove the garlic from the oil and reserve it for later. Make sure to remove all the garlic to prevent a bitter burnt garlic taste.

Carefully squeeze the zucchini noodles between 2 layers of kitchen towels to draw out moisture.

Turn the heat under the pan up to high. Add the zucchini noodles and chile flakes and cook for 3 to 5 minutes, until the noodles are tender and golden brown at the edges. Remove from the heat, top with the cooked garlic and the pine nuts, and serve.

Broccoli-Based Greek-Style Salad with Oregano Dressing

I'm such a big fan of Greek food; it's one of the cuisines I would regularly take my mom to enjoy. And every meal would start with sharing a Greek salad with her. In my opinion, the only thing better than the classic version is one with even more vegetables—in this case, with the addition of broccoli. Raw broccoli (in addition to being a naturally detoxifying food) plays beautifully with this briny, herbal dressing. If you want to round it out even further, try tossing a little cooked shrimp or chicken into the mix.

Serves 4

1 small head broccoli, including stems, cut into bite-sized pieces	2 Roma tomatoes, peeled and roughly chopped
1 large red bell pepper, cut into bite-sized pieces	1 cup kalamata olives, pitted and roughly chopped, plus 2 tablespoons olive brine
1 large green bell pepper, cut into bite-sized pieces	¼ cup fresh parsley, roughly chopped
1 large English cucumber, peeled and roughly chopped	⅓ cup red wine vinegar
1 medium-sized red onion, roughly chopped	⅓ cup extra-virgin olive oil
	2 tablespoons dried oregano
	1 teaspoon ground black pepper
	1 teaspoon salt

In a large bowl, toss together the broccoli, bell peppers, cucumber, onion, and tomatoes. Add the olives and parsley and gently fold to combine.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the vinegar, oil, olive brine, oregano, black pepper, and salt. Drizzle the dressing over the salad, carefully toss (so as not to crush the olives), and serve.

Kelp Noodles with Brazil Nut Pesto

I'm a huge fan of pesto, probably because my mom was, too. (She'd also seize any opportunity to link the word *pesto* to *pest*, which she'd lovingly call me.) For that reason, you'll find a few pesto variations in this book. This version is not just utterly delicious, it brings together some powerful, health-boosting ingredients. Uniting Brazil nuts, which are loaded with selenium, with kelp noodles, which are packed with iodine, you have a one-two punch for feeling and looking your best. Plus, this is a keto-friendly "pasta" dish using only healthy fats—what's not to love?

Serves 2 to 3

12 ounces kelp noodles
1/2 medium lemon
1 teaspoon salt, divided
1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 cup fresh basil leaves
1 cup Brazil nuts*

1 teaspoon garlic powder
2 tablespoons nutritional yeast

* Alternatively, you can use 1/2 cup Brazil nuts and 1/2 cup macadamia nuts.

Place the kelp noodles in a bowl filled with water and squeeze the lemon half into the bowl, saving 1 teaspoon lemon juice for the pesto. Add 1/2 teaspoon of the salt, stir lightly, and set aside for 30 minutes.

Combine the oil, basil, Brazil nuts, remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt, the garlic powder, nutritional yeast, and reserved 1 teaspoon lemon juice in a blender and pulse until coarsely chopped. Set aside.

Drain the kelp noodles and pat dry with a paper towel. Toss the kelp noodles with the pesto and serve.





Roasted Broccoli with Shallots and Dried Fish

Dried fish? Really? Well, even if you're not a fish lover, you'll probably love this dish—the fish adds a bit of saltiness, which plays nicely off the sweetness of the dates. If you're really fish averse (or vegetarian), try using $\frac{1}{4}$ cup nutritional yeast instead.

Serves 4

4 cups bite-sized broccoli florets (1 large head)	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup bonito flakes (available in Japanese supermarkets), minced dried sardines (available in Korean markets), or dried shrimp (found in the international aisle of most well-stocked grocery stores)
6 shallots, thinly sliced	
$\frac{1}{4}$ cup minced dates	
$\frac{1}{4}$ cup extra-virgin olive oil	2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar

Preheat the oven to 375°F.

In a large bowl, toss together the broccoli, shallots, dates, and oil. Spread on a sheet pan and bake for 15 to 20 minutes, until the broccoli is tender and crisp at the edges.

Remove from the oven and carefully toss with the dried fish of your choice and the vinegar. Return to the oven and bake for an additional 5 to 10 minutes, until the vinegar is syrupy. Serve immediately.

Mustard and Miso Broccoli

The combination of mustard and miso in this dish creates a cheese-like sauce for the broccoli—a great thing for all you broccoli and cheddar lovers out there—but without the dairy. You can omit the walnuts, but I absolutely love the crunch they deliver.

Serves 4

4 cups broccoli florets (1 large head)
3 shallots, roughly chopped
1 cup walnut halves
3 tablespoons walnut oil
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard

1½ teaspoons coconut aminos
2 tablespoons red or white miso paste
Zest and juice of 1 lemon
1 teaspoon monk fruit sweetener
1 clove garlic, minced

Preheat the oven to 400°F.

In a large bowl, toss together the broccoli, shallots, and walnuts.

In a small bowl, whisk together the walnut oil, mustard, coconut aminos, miso, lemon zest and juice, monk fruit, and garlic. Toss the dressing with the broccoli mixture.

Spread out on a sheet pan and bake for 20 to 25 minutes, turning the broccoli a couple times, until the broccoli is crisp and lightly charred. Remove from the oven and serve immediately.

Simple Bone Broth

Bone broth is delicious, easy to make, and highly versatile. It's a staple dish that humans have been likely making for millennia. It also cuts down on food waste since you can use bones left over from dinner. Plus, it's majorly nourishing, providing a bevy of nutrients: collagen, protein, and electrolytes, to name a few. This is a recipe from my friend Amanda Meixner, aka @MeowMeix on Instagram. It utilizes an Instant Pot, which will shorten the cook time, but I've provided alternate, stove-top instructions as well.

Serves 4

Chicken bones from a whole chicken (turkey or beef bones can also be used)

Assorted veggies for flavor (i.e., half an onion, a few carrots and/or celery stalks)

Fresh herbs (thyme, sage, and rosemary are my go-tos)

1 teaspoon Himalayan sea salt

1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar

Water (enough to completely submerge the bones)

Place the bones in Instant Pot and top with veggies, herbs, and salt.

Add apple cider vinegar and then enough water to completely cover the bones and veggies.

Wait an hour before starting the Instant Pot. This will allow the vinegar to pull minerals out of the bones.

Hit the soup button and set 120 minutes on the Instant Pot on the high-pressure setting.

Wait 15 minutes before depressurizing the pot.

Strain the broth and pour into a mug for a simple drink.

Note: If you are making bone broth on a stove, bring water to a boil and simmer for 24 to 72 hours.



Spiced Chickpea and Broccoli Stew with Turmeric and Mint

This stew is inspired by a soup I frequently crave—the restaurant that serves it uses only dry spices, but the addition of fresh turmeric adds a sweet earthiness (and bonus health kick) that plays really well with the nutty chickpeas. Try adding cilantro to the finished product for even more of a fresh zing.

Serves 4

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
2 medium yellow onions, finely diced
2 ribs celery, diced
4 cups bite-sized broccoli florets (1 large head)
2 (15-ounce) cans chickpeas, drained and rinsed*
2 tablespoons minced fresh ginger
2 tablespoons minced fresh turmeric**
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon

2 cups chicken bone broth or vegetable broth
1 cup plain unsweetened coconut yogurt, divided
½ cup sliced fresh mint

*You can cook your own chickpeas (I suggest pressure cooking), but using high-quality canned is a great time-saver on a busy night. If desired, substitute 3 cups cooked chickpeas for 2 cans.

**If you can't find fresh turmeric, use 1½ teaspoons dried turmeric instead.

Heat the oil in a large soup pot over medium-high heat. Add the onions and celery and cook, stirring occasionally, for 4 to 6 minutes, until tender.

Add the broccoli, turn the heat up to high, and cook for 3 to 5 minutes to get a char on the broccoli. Add the chickpeas, ginger, and fresh turmeric (if using dried instead, wait until the next step) and cook until very fragrant, 1 to 2 minutes.

Add the cumin, black pepper, cinnamon, and dried turmeric, if using, and cook for 1 additional minute.

Add the broth, bring to a simmer, then reduce the heat to low and cook until the stew is nice and thick, 20 to 25 minutes. Fold half of the yogurt and all of the mint into the stew. Serve, with dollops of the remaining yogurt on top.



Broccoli “Falafel” with Creamy Avocado Sauce

Growing up in New York City, I had access to the best falafel outside of the Middle East! Unfortunately, most are deep-fried in unhealthy oils and also not the best option if you’re trying to limit starch in your diet. Not too long ago, I wondered, *Could baked falafel ever be as delicious as fried?* My imagination ran wild, and the next thing you know, I was in my kitchen experimenting with the vegetables I had on hand. I discovered that the combination of broccoli and walnuts makes a beautiful—and less starchy—falafel, which goes perfectly with the creamy avocado-sesame sauce in this recipe.

Serves 4

2 cups broccoli florets (1/2 large head)	1/2 cup fresh parsley leaves
1 medium red onion, cut into small pieces	1/4 cup ground flaxseeds, plus more as needed
1 cup raw walnuts	1/4 cup tahini (sesame seed paste)
1 teaspoon salt, divided	1 tablespoon sesame oil
4 tablespoons avocado oil, divided	1 avocado, flesh scooped out
Zest of 3 lemons, divided	Juice of 2 lemons
1/2 teaspoon paprika	1 clove garlic, peeled
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin	1/4 cup fresh dill, roughly chopped
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano	
1/4 cup toasted sesame seeds	

Preheat the oven to 400°F.

In a large bowl, combine the broccoli, onion, walnuts, and a 1/2 teaspoon of the salt. Add 2 tablespoons of the avocado oil and toss to coat the ingredients.

Transfer to sheet pan and roast for 15 to 20 minutes, until the broccoli is tender and slightly charred. Remove from oven and let cool until easy to handle. Do *not* turn off the oven.

Transfer the broccoli mix to a food processor fitted with an “S” blade and add the zest of 1 lemon, the paprika, cumin, oregano, sesame seeds, parsley, and flaxseeds. Pulse until well combined, then let rest for 15 minutes.

If the mixture is too wet to shape, add more flaxseeds. If it's too dry or crumbly, add water, 1 teaspoon at a time. With damp hands, shape the mixture into small 2-bite balls.

Heat the remaining 2 tablespoons avocado oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the falafel (you'll likely need to work in batches) and sear for 1 to 2 minutes per side, until golden brown. Transfer to a sheet pan and bake for 5 to 10 minutes to warm through.

While the falafel is in the oven, make the sauce: Combine the remaining salt, the tahini, sesame oil, avocado, remaining lemon zest, the lemon juice, garlic, and dill in a blender or food processor fitted with an "S" blade. Blend until creamy, thinning with water as needed. Serve with the falafel.

Broccoli Walnut Bisque

This is one of the most indulgent recipes in this book—it's creamy, rich, and nutty, and it truly feels like a special occasion food. The key to making this soup taste rich and nutty, rather than a bit sulfuric (as broccoli sometimes does) is to thoroughly cook the vegetables to really develop their flavor before simmering the soup.

Serves 4 to 6

4 tablespoons walnut oil, divided	2 cups toasted walnuts, soaked in 2 cups water for 8 hours or up to overnight
2 shallots, minced	Juice of 1 lemon
1 clove garlic, minced	¼ cup roughly chopped toasted walnuts
4 cups broccoli florets (1 large head)	Unsweetened coconut cream
6 cups chicken bone broth or vegetable broth	

Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a large soup pot over medium-high heat. Add the shallots, garlic, and broccoli and cook until the shallots and garlic are tender and fragrant and the broccoli is beginning to crisp up. Reduce the heat to medium and add the broth, soaked walnuts and their soaking liquid, and lemon juice to pot. Bring to a simmer, then reduce the heat to maintain a simmer, cover, and cook until the broccoli is just tender, about 8 minutes.

With a hand blender or in a standing blender in batches, blend the soup until smooth and creamy (I like to use a high-powered blender to really get the walnuts broken down).

Return the soup to the pot, place over medium heat, and simmer to thicken or stir in additional broth to thin to your desired consistency (I like mine very thick and creamy).

Serve drizzled with the remaining 2 tablespoons oil, the toasted walnuts, and a small dollop of coconut cream.

Broccoli “Latkes” with Blueberry Applesauce

Come the holiday season, what could you always guarantee was cooking in the Lugavere household? Latkes. I don’t care what anyone says, my grandma Hilda made the best in Murray Hill! These, well . . . these are pretty far from traditional latkes. And you know what? That’s okay. When you combine these crispy, salty broccoli fritter/pancakes with a tangy, sweet sauce, the result is magical, whether you’re celebrating a holiday or just making a weeknight dinner.

Serves 4 to 6

3 large apples, peeled and roughly chopped*	1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup fresh or frozen blueberries	3 tablespoons almond flour
1/4 cup water	2 tablespoons tapioca starch, plus more as needed
2 tablespoons monk fruit sweetener	3 tablespoons avocado oil, plus more as needed
1 cinnamon stick	
Zest and juice of 1 lemon	
1 small yellow onion, roughly chopped	
1 medium head broccoli, roughly chopped	*I like Gala, Golden Delicious, or Fuji for this recipe, but any sweet apple will work.
2 eggs	

In a large soup pot with a tight-fitting lid, combine the apples, blueberries, water, monk fruit, cinnamon, and lemon zest and lemon juice. Place over low heat, cover, and cook for 20 to 30 minutes, until the apples fall apart. Using a potato masher, mash the apples for a chunky sauce (blend for a smoother sauce) and continue to cook until excess water evaporates. Remove from the heat and set aside.

While applesauce is cooking, make the latkes: In a food processor fitted with an “S” blade, pulse the onion and broccoli until broken down to the size of grains of rice. You can also grate the onion and broccoli on the large holes of a box grater.

Transfer to a large bowl and add the eggs, salt, almond flour, and tapioca starch.

Heat the oil in a large skillet or on a griddle over medium heat. Add the broccoli mixture in 3-tablespoon scoops (or smaller for bite-sized latkes). Cook for 2 to 3 minutes on each side, until golden brown and crisp. Serve immediately, topped with the applesauce.

Fish Sauce Caramel-Glazed Beef Spring Rolls

These lettuce-wrapped spring rolls are inspired by traditional Vietnamese spring rolls, but lightened up by removing the rice paper wrappers. It takes a bit of practice to wrap these rolls perfectly, but once you get it, it's a skill you'll have forever—and if you don't . . . you still win, because you end up with a delicious salad instead. Try to make with a high-quality fish sauce, which is usually just fish and salt.

Serves 4

1/4 cup fish sauce	2 medium carrots, cut into matchsticks
2 1/2 tablespoons monk fruit sweetener, divided	1 jalapeño, cut into matchsticks
2 tablespoons fresh lime juice	1 cup bean sprouts
2 cloves garlic, minced	1/4 cup fresh mint leaves
1 pound flank or skirt steak	1/4 cup fresh Thai basil leaves
2 tablespoons sesame oil	1/4 cup fresh cilantro leaves
8 to 12 Bibb lettuce leaves	1/4 cup fresh shiso leaves (optional but nice)

For the dipping sauce:

1/4 cup unsweetened almond butter	Juice of 1 lime
2 tablespoons coconut aminos or tamari	1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
1 tablespoon fish sauce	

In a small saucepan, combine the fish sauce, 2 tablespoons of the monk fruit, the lime juice, and garlic and heat over medium-low heat until the monk fruit is dissolved. Let cool to room temperature, then pour over the steak. Marinate in refrigerator for at least 3 hours or up to overnight.

When ready to cook, remove the meat from the marinade, reserving the marinade. Pat the steak dry.

Heat a large skillet over high heat and add the sesame oil. Add the steak and sear for 3 to 4 minutes on each side, until brown and caramelized on the outside, then remove from the heat to a cutting board. Add the remaining marinade to skillet, along with the remaining 1/2 tablespoon monk fruit and all the dipping sauce ingredients and cook, stirring occasionally, until the monk fruit is dissolved and the mixture comes together. Let cool.

Slice the steak into thin, easy-to-bite pieces and place 1 or 2 pieces in the center of each lettuce leaf. Add the carrots, jalapeño, bean sprouts, mint, Thai basil, cilantro, and shiso, if using, and roll like you would a burrito. Serve with the dipping sauce on the side.

Note: Instead of making spring rolls, you could chop the steak, lettuce, bean sprouts, herbs, and pickled vegetables into a salad and use the dipping sauce as a salad dressing.



Blackberry, Avocado, and Basil Salad

Blackberries in a salad? You're damn right! You'll be impressed with how nicely the tangy blackberries play off the creaminess of the avocado. If you're not a coconut fan, you can absolutely leave it off to the side—but I seriously suggest trying it. It adds a toasty flavor rather than an overwhelming coconut flavor.

Serves 4

2 large shallots, minced

Juice of 2 limes

2 cups blackberries, sliced in half

1 cup toasted pecan halves

1/2 cup unsweetened shredded coconut,
toasted

5 cups baby spinach, loosely packed

2 cups fresh basil leaves, roughly torn

2 avocados, cubed

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil

1/4 cup red wine vinegar

In a small bowl, cover the shallots in the lime juice and set aside for 15 to 20 minutes to tame the bite of the shallots.

In a large bowl, toss together the blackberries, pecan halves, coconut, spinach, basil, and avocados.

Add the oil and vinegar to the shallot and lime juice mixture, pour the dressing over the salad, toss, and serve.





Beef Meatball, Garlic, and Greens Soup

New York City became a melting pot in the early twentieth century, attracting people from all over the world who sought a better life for themselves and their families. That's probably why Italian food is almost as familiar to my palate as traditional Jewish food. This dish is a riff on Italian wedding soup, featuring mini meatballs (or big meatballs if you'd prefer), hearty greens, and plenty of garlic to punch up the flavor. This is sort of a three-for-one recipe deal; you can also use the meatballs to go with sweet potato (or other grain-free) noodles, or to use as a topping on a cauliflower crust pizza.

Serves 4 to 6

1 pound ground beef	1 tablespoon tapioca starch, plus more as needed
1 teaspoon garlic powder	1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 teaspoon onion powder	1 head garlic, cloves thinly sliced
1 teaspoon paprika	6 cups beef or chicken bone broth
1 teaspoon ground black pepper	1 bunch lacinato kale, ribs removed, leaves thinly sliced
1/2 teaspoon salt, or to taste	1 bunch Swiss chard, thinly sliced
1 egg, beaten	Hot sauce (optional)

First, make the meatballs: In a large bowl, combine the beef, garlic powder, onion powder, paprika, black pepper, salt, egg, and tapioca starch. Fold together with clean hands until well mixed and check that the mixture forms into a ball easily—if it's overly wet, add tapioca starch 1 teaspoon at a time.

Fill a small bowl with water and wet your hands (it's easier to work the meat with wet hands). Shape the mixture into bite-sized meatballs, place on a plate or tray, and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.

Heat the oil in a large soup pot over medium-high heat. Add the meatballs and sear on all sides, about 1 minute per side, until golden brown and lightly crusted on the outside. Add the garlic to the pot and cook until the garlic is very fragrant and golden brown. Add the broth, bring to a simmer, then lower the heat, cover, and simmer for 20 minutes for the meatballs to cook through and to infuse the soup with garlic flavor. Add the sliced greens and cook, uncovered, stirring occasionally, until the greens are wilted, about 8 minutes. Taste and season with salt and/or hot sauce and serve.

Spicy Sesame Broccoli Slaw

What do New York Jews always eat at Christmas time? Chinese food. (The phenomenon is so ubiquitous and dates back so long—over one hundred years, to be precise—it has even been studied in the academic literature.)⁴⁶ This slaw reminds me a bit of a classic Chinese chicken salad, which, let’s admit, is probably an American creation. Nonetheless, what we have here is even better—sweet, tangy, nutty, creamy, and nicely crisp. It pairs well with anything barbecued or with a simple seared chicken or salmon dish.

Serves 4

3 cups broccoli slaw*
1 medium red onion, thinly sliced
1 jalapeño, thinly sliced
1 cup shredded red cabbage
½ cup fresh cilantro leaves
1 avocado, chopped
¼ cup tahini (sesame paste)
1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil
1 teaspoon rice vinegar
Juice of 1 lemon

1 teaspoon monk fruit sweetener (optional)
1 to 3 teaspoons coconut aminos or tamari
2 ripe oranges, segmented (optional)
Sriracha
3 tablespoons toasted sesame seeds

*Available in the prepackaged veggie selection in most well-stocked grocery stores. To make it yourself, it’s a mixture of shredded broccoli stems, cabbage, and carrots.

In a large bowl, toss together the slaw, onion, jalapeño, cabbage, and cilantro until well combined.

In a blender or a food processor fitted with an “S” blade, combine the avocado, tahini, oil, vinegar, lemon juice, monk fruit, and 1½ teaspoons coconut aminos and blend until very smooth and creamy.

Gently toss the dressing and oranges into the slaw mixture. Taste and add sriracha and coconut aminos as you like. Serve topped with the toasted sesame seeds.





Garlic and Curry Snacking Almonds

This dish looks so simple in the bowl—just seasoned almonds. But once you get a bite, you’ll be hooked—the spices are rounded out by naturally sweet dried coconut for an unbeatable flavor. I keep these on hand just about all the time—and rely on them as a topping for a simple salad or a protein-rich snack to hold me over in between meals.

Serves 4 to 6

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil	1 tablespoon curry powder
2 cups lightly toasted almonds	½ teaspoon ground cumin
1 egg white, beaten with a fork until foamy	1 teaspoon salt
2 cloves garlic, grated on a Microplane	¼ cup unsweetened shredded coconut

Preheat the oven to 325°F. Line a sheet pan with parchment paper and drizzle with the oil.

In a large bowl, toss the almonds with the egg white, making sure each almond is coated. Add the garlic and toss again to combine.

In a small bowl, combine the curry powder, cumin, salt, and shredded coconut.

Add the spice mixture to the nut mixture and stir well to thoroughly coat. Transfer to the prepared sheet pan and bake for 30 minutes, pausing to stir mixture every 10 minutes. Let cool before enjoying.



Avocado and Ginger Chicken Spring Rolls

Growing up in New York City, I had access to incredible Chinese food. One of my favorite treats was spring rolls, which became off-limits when I learned that they're usually deep-fried in unhealthy oils. Enter this delicious and healthy twist. I love the addition of avocado to these ginger-rich lettuce-wrapped spring rolls. The creaminess balances out the minor bite from the ginger and the heat from the dipping sauce. If you have trouble mastering the art of wrapping these spring rolls, that's okay—chopping the lettuce with the other ingredients makes a great salad!

Makes 8 to 12

3 tablespoons sesame oil	Butter lettuce leaves, for wrapping
1 shallot, minced	1 large carrot, cut into matchsticks
3 cloves garlic, minced	¼ cup fresh mint leaves
3 tablespoons minced fresh ginger	¼ cup fresh basil leaves
1 pound ground chicken	2 avocados, thinly sliced
2 tablespoons coconut aminos or tamari	

For the dipping sauce:

1 cup hot water	½ cup fish sauce
½ cup monk fruit sweetener	2 cloves garlic, minced
Juice of 2 limes	1 jalapeño or bird's eye chile, minced

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the shallot, garlic, and ginger and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until very fragrant. Add the chicken and cook until the chicken is browned and cooked through, about 7 to 10 minutes. Add the coconut aminos and simmer down until the liquid evaporates. Remove from the heat and let the mixture cool to room temperature.

To make the dipping sauce, in a small bowl, combine the hot water and monk fruit and stir until the monk fruit is dissolved. Add the lime juice, fish sauce, garlic, and chile and stir to combine.

Assemble your spring rolls: Place a couple spoonfuls of the chicken mixture in the center of a lettuce leaf and follow it with some carrot slices, a few mint and basil leaves, and some avocado slices. Roll like you would a burrito, dip, and eat.

Avocado, Fennel, Pomegranate, and Winter Citrus Salad

This is one of my favorite salads of all time. I'm such a big fan of raw fennel that I almost decided to name my podcast *The Max Lugavere Raw Fennel Love Show*. It's a riff on a classic citrus and fennel salad featuring fruits and veggies that are in season in the winter, along with hearty, peppery arugula to balance out the sweetness of the citrus and apples.

Serves 4

1 shallot, minced	1 grapefruit, peel removed, cut into half-moons
¼ cup red wine vinegar	2 blood oranges, peel removed, cut into rounds
Zest and juice of ½ lemon	2 tangerines, peel removed, cut into rounds
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil	¼ cup kumquats, thinly sliced
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard	2 avocados, thinly sliced
2 cups arugula	½ cup pomegranate arils
1 bulb fennel, cored and thinly sliced	½ cup minced fresh mint
1 green apple, cored and cut into matchsticks	

In a large bowl, whisk together the shallot, vinegar, lemon zest and juice, the oil, and mustard until well combined.

In a large bowl, toss together arugula, fennel, and apple and spread onto a serving platter. Top with the sliced grapefruit, blood oranges, tangerines, and kumquats, spreading them around for even distribution.

Spread the avocados on top of the citrus and immediately drizzle with the dressing to prevent the avocado from browning. Top with the pomegranate and mint and serve.



Zucchini and Carrot Noodles with Herbed Avocado “Pesto”

As someone who tends to avoid typical grain-based pastas, I appreciate that more and more stores are carrying vegetable “noodles” in the precut veggie section—and they’re also super easy to make on your own. I find that the ultra-creamy pesto in this is the perfect companion to the crisp veggie noodles—and if you want a real treat, consider pairing this with Olive Oil–Poached Salmon.

Serves 4

3 cups zucchini noodles (about 3 large zucchini, spiralized or cut into thin, spaghetti-sized strips)	1 large avocado
2 cups carrot noodles (about 3 large carrots, spiralized or cut into thin, spaghetti-sized strips)	1 clove garlic, peeled
1½ teaspoons salt, divided	Zest and juice of 1 lemon
4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided	¼ cup minced fresh dill
1 teaspoon ground black pepper	¼ cup minced fresh parsley
½ teaspoon red chile flakes	1 cup fresh basil leaves
	¼ cup nutritional yeast
	½ cup toasted slivered almonds

Place the zucchini and carrot noodles in a large bowl and sprinkle with ½ teaspoon of the salt. Set aside for 5 to 10 minutes to draw out moisture. Pat the noodles dry.

Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the noodles, ¼ teaspoon of the salt, black pepper, and chile flakes, and cook for 5 to 7 minutes, stirring frequently, until the noodles are tender and crisp at the edges. Allow to cool slightly while you make the sauce.

In a food processor fitted with an “S” blade, combine the avocado, garlic, lemon zest, dill, and parsley and process until smooth. Add the basil and nutritional yeast and pulse to combine.

With the motor running, stream in the lemon juice and remaining 2 tablespoons oil until a smooth, creamy sauce is formed. Taste and season with the remaining salt, ¼ tsp at a time, until your taste buds are satisfied.

Off the heat, toss the noodles with the sauce, top with the slivered almonds, and serve.

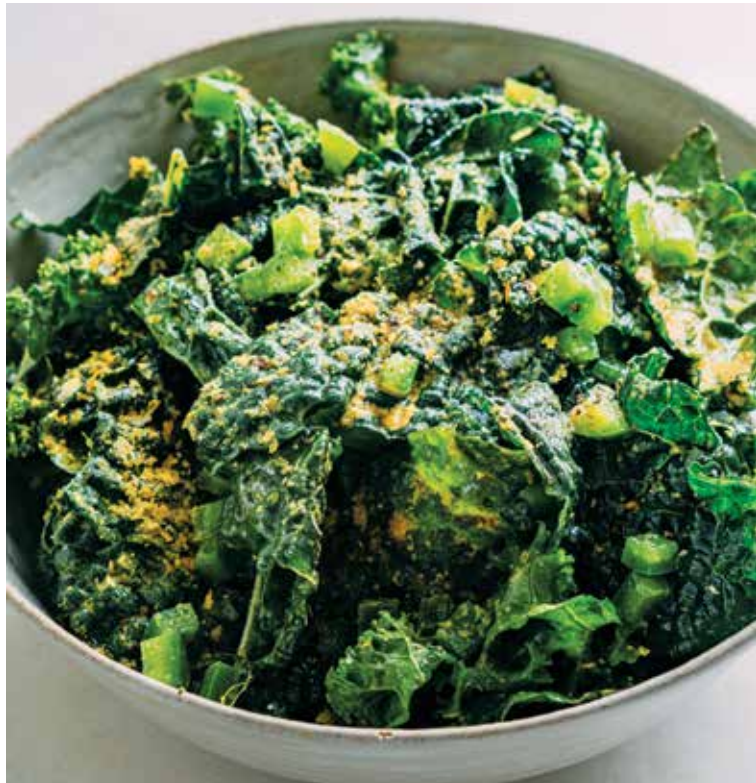
“Cheesy” Kale Salad

Here’s a delicious salad that’s easy to make and savory enough to convert even the most salad-phobic of the bunch. If you really want to go crazy (live a little!), find some anchovies packed in either extra-virgin olive oil or water at your local market, chop them lightly, and toss with the dressing. Though this salad is perfect as a starter, I love to throw a Simple Burger Patty on top of it to make a complete meal.

Serves 2 to 3

1 bunch kale, center ribs and stems removed	¼ cup nutritional yeast
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil	1 teaspoon garlic powder
2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar	¾ teaspoon salt
½ large green bell pepper, chopped	

Tear the kale leaves into small pieces and place them in a large bowl. Add the oil and vinegar and stir or massage it into the leaves to start to soften them. Add the green pepper, then the nutritional yeast, garlic powder, and salt and toss until everything is well combined.





Charred Eggplant with Chiles and Avocado

Charring the eggplant in this dish adds a slightly sweet, really nutty flavor, one that balances out the spiced extra-virgin olive oil the dish is cooked in. Plus, the addition of sweet pomegranates, fresh mint, and creamy avocado is the perfect balance for the rich, spicy eggplant that's the star of this dish.

Serves 4

2 large eggplants, cut into 1/2-inch rounds	1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
1 1/2 teaspoons salt, divided	1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided	2 avocados, skin and pit removed
1 large red onion, cut into rings	Zest and juice of 1 lemon
2 Fresno or other hot chiles, seeds removed, cut into rings	1/4 cup minced fresh mint
	1/2 cup pomegranate arils

Sprinkle the eggplant rounds with 3/4 teaspoon of the salt and let rest for 15 to 20 minutes.

In a large saute pan, heat 3 tablespoons of the oil over medium-low heat. Add the onion and chile, reduce the heat to low, and cook for 10 to 15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the onion is very tender. Remove the vegetables from the pan to a bowl using a slotted spoon and let the oil cool to room temperature.

Carefully transfer the oil to a heatproof measuring cup or other container that's easy to pour from.

Pat the eggplant dry with a kitchen towel, using pressure to squeeze out as much of the excess liquid as possible.

Heat 1 tablespoon of the chile-infused oil in the skillet over high heat. Working in batches, cook the eggplant rounds, being careful not to crowd the pan, for 3 to 5 minutes per side, until charred all over, replenishing the oil as needed.

Arrange the eggplant on a serving tray and carefully pat with paper towels to remove excess oil. Top with the onion and chile. Combine the cumin, the remaining 3/4 teaspoon salt, and the black pepper and sprinkle the spice mixture on top.

Whisk together the remaining oil, ripe avocados, lemon zest, and lemon juice until well combined. Top the eggplants with dollops of the avocado mixture, sprinkle with the mint and pomegranate arils, and serve.

Broccoli “Rice” with Pomegranate and Fresh Herbs

Just like cauliflower rice, broccoli rice is making quite the splash in many produce sections, and with good reason—it’s a great alternative to traditional rice. And when tossed with plenty of fresh herbs, salty pistachios, and sweet pomegranate, this dish is more than just a healthy take on rice—it’s flavorful, delicious, and totally craveable.

Serves 4

4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided

1 medium yellow onion, minced

4 cups broccoli rice*

1 teaspoon ground turmeric

1 teaspoon ground black pepper

1 teaspoon salt

½ cup minced fresh parsley

½ cup minced fresh cilantro

¼ cup minced fresh dill

¼ cup minced fresh mint

1½ cups pomegranate arils

¾ cup salted shelled pistachios

*Available in the packaged veggie section of most major grocery stores. To make your own, pulse stems of broccoli in a food processor to the size of a grain of rice.

In a large saute pan, heat 2 tablespoons of the oil over medium-high heat. Add the onion and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until translucent. Add the broccoli rice, turmeric, black pepper, and salt and cook for 7 to 10 minutes, until the broccoli rice is tender. Remove from the heat and fold in the parsley, cilantro, dill, mint, and pomegranate arils. Top with the pistachios and serve.

Lemongrass, Mint, and Basil Roasted Broccoli

I'm always puzzled by people who don't enjoy broccoli. I wonder, *Have you just never had it properly prepared?* For even the staunchest of broccoli haters, this dish is really special. The combination of sesame oil, lemongrass, and mint offset the nuttiness of the roasted broccoli and sesame seeds beautifully, and basil adds a bright herbal note that reminds me of Vietnamese food—one of my favorites.

Serves 4

2 tablespoons avocado oil

1 tablespoon sesame oil

4 tablespoons very finely chopped
lemongrass, divided

4 cups broccoli florets (1 large head)

¼ cup minced fresh mint

¼ cup minced fresh basil

¼ cup toasted sesame seeds

1 to 2 teaspoons coconut aminos or tamari

Preheat the oven to 425°F.

In a small saucepan, combine the avocado oil, sesame oil, and 2 tablespoons of the lemongrass. Cook over low heat for 5 to 10 minutes to infuse the lemongrass flavor into the oil.

Toss the oil with the broccoli and remaining 2 tablespoons lemongrass. Spread on a sheetpan and bake for 10 to 15 minutes, until the broccoli is tender and crisp at the edges. Toss with the mint and return to the oven for 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from the oven, toss with the basil, sesame seeds, and coconut aminos, and serve.



Crispy Broccoli Hot “Wings”

I’ll be the first to admit—traditional chicken hot wings are delicious, and you can find my recipe for the best (and, shockingly, best for you) you’ve ever had. But there’s no reason you can’t love these broccoli “wings” equally as much, especially as a side dish. Plus, they’re the perfect crowd pleaser for a game day or party. They’ve got the same crispy, spicy kick as buffalo wings, too.

Serves 6 to 8

3 tablespoons avocado oil, plus more for the pan	1 teaspoon salt
1 cup unsweetened canned coconut or almond milk	4 cups broccoli florets (1 large head)
1 cup plus 1 tablespoon cayenne hot sauce (Tabasco, Crystal, or Frank’s RedHot preferred), divided	4 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 cup tapioca starch	1/4 cup plain unsweetened coconut yogurt
1 1/2 cups almond flour, divided, plus more as needed	1/2 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
1 1/4 cups ground flaxseeds, divided, plus more as needed	1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
	1/4 teaspoon celery salt
	1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
	2 tablespoons nutritional yeast

Preheat the oven to 425°F. Lightly grease a sheet pan with oil and place inside the oven to preheat the pan (this will give you crispier “wings”).

In a shallow bowl, whisk together the milk, 1 tablespoon of the hot sauce, the tapioca starch, 1/2 cup of the almond flour, 1/4 cup of the flaxseeds, and the salt to make a batter.

In a separate bowl, whisk together the remaining 1 cup almond flour and 1 cup flaxseeds.

Dip the broccoli florets in the batter, then transfer to the dry mixture and toss to coat well. If you run out of dry mixture, replenish with equal parts almond flour and flaxseeds.

When all the broccoli is coated, transfer to the hot sheet pan (carefully—don’t burn yourself) in a single layer. Bake for 8 minutes, then flip and bake for another 5 to 7 minutes, until nicely browned.

Meanwhile, heat the oil and garlic in a small saucepan over medium heat for 2 to 3 minutes, until the garlic is softened and fragrant. Add the remaining 1 cup hot sauce and remove from the heat.

To make the dipping sauce: Whisk together the coconut yogurt, lemon juice, vinegar, celery salt, black pepper, and nutritional yeast.

When the wings come out of the oven, gently drizzle with the hot sauce mixture (or go for a full dip if you're feeling bold). Serve immediately.

Junk-Free, Dairy-Free Spinach and Artichoke Dip

There was a time in my life when the dip was the first thing I'd go for on a party buffet table, and I'm happy to say that when it comes to this dip, loaded with some of my favs like nutritional yeast and extra-virgin olive oil, I'm right there again. It's a healthy way to enjoy the party classic—just make sure to go for healthy dippers such as sweet potato chips or, even better, raw veggies!

Serves 4

2 cups raw cashews, macadamia nuts, or peeled almonds, soaked in water overnight and drained	¼ cup nutritional yeast, or to taste
¾ cup water	1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
Zest and juice of 1 lemon	3 cups chopped baby spinach
1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar	3 cloves garlic, chopped
1 teaspoon paprika	1 (14-ounce) can quartered artichoke hearts, drained and roughly chopped
1 teaspoon onion powder	Splash of unsweetened canned coconut milk (optional)
1 teaspoon salt, or to taste	

Make your “cheese” sauce: Combine the cashews, water, lemon zest and juice, vinegar, paprika, onion powder, salt, and nutritional yeast in a food processor fitted with an “S” blade and process to a very smooth, creamy sauce, at least 3 to 4 minutes.

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the spinach and garlic and cook until the garlic is fragrant and the spinach is wilted, about 4 minutes. Add the artichoke hearts and cook to release extra moisture, 2 to 3 minutes, then transfer the spinach mixture to a bowl.

Fold in the “cheese” sauce and taste—add salt if you'd like it saltier, more nutritional yeast for a “cheesier” flavor, or a splash of coconut milk to make it creamier. Serve with sweet potato chips or veggies for dipping.



Garlicky Chard with Dried Blueberries

Greens sauteed with garlic is one of my all-time favorite simple side dishes—but when I want to take it up a notch, there’s nothing like toasted nuts and tangy dried blueberries to round out the flavor and elevate the dish. The nuttiness and sweetness play nicely off the bite of the garlic, for a “party in your mouth” with every bite.

Serves 4

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil	2 bunches Swiss chard, stems and leaves separated and chopped separately
8 cloves garlic, thinly sliced	1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
1/4 cup slivered blanched almonds	1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup unsweetened dried blueberries	1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper

Heat the oil in a very large skillet over medium heat. Add the garlic and almonds and cook, stirring frequently, until the ingredients are golden brown and the garlic is fragrant, 2 to 3 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, scoop the garlic and almonds from the oil and set aside for later.

Increase the heat to medium-high, add the blueberries and chard stems to the pan, and cook until the chard stems are tender, about 7 minutes. Add the chard leaves and cook, tossing frequently, until wilted and tender, about 5 minutes. Add the vinegar, salt, and black pepper, increase the heat to high, and cook, stirring frequently, until the vinegar is reduced to a syrupy consistency. Remove from the heat, return the garlic and almonds to the pan, mix them in, and serve.

Israeli-Style Pickled Cabbage

I looked into my ancestry with a popular gene-testing site and found out that I'm 99.8 percent Ashkenazi Jew. That means I'm hardwired to enjoy two things: Larry David and anything pickled. Hamutzim are Israeli-style pickled veggies that are often served before a big meal to perk up your taste buds and get your mouth watering. This simple quick-pickled cabbage is great paired with something creamy like hummus or avocado, or with rich grilled beef, and it's also great in place of traditional slaw.

Serves 6 to 8

1 small head red cabbage	1/4 teaspoon dill seeds
4 tablespoons salt, divided	2 cloves garlic, peeled
1 cup red wine vinegar	1 teaspoon mustard seeds
1 1/2 cups distilled white vinegar	1 small cinnamon stick
1/4 cup monk fruit sweetener	1 serrano pepper, halved
Zest and juice of 1 lemon (cut the zest into large strips)	1 bunch dill

Loosely chop the cabbage and spread it on a sheet pan. Sprinkle with 2 tablespoons of the salt and let sit for at least 2 hours or up to overnight (counter is fine or fridge if you live in a hot climate).

When ready to pickle, combine the red wine vinegar, distilled vinegar, the remaining 2 tablespoons salt, the monk fruit, and lemon zest and juice in a medium saucepan and heat over medium low heat until the salt and sweetener have dissolved.

Pat the cabbage dry (be careful, it will stain), then tightly pack it into jars, dividing the dill seeds, garlic, mustard seeds, cinnamon, hot pepper, and dill evenly among the jars (you will need to break up the cinnamon stick unless you are using one very big jar).

Divide the brine equally among the jars. It should cover the cabbage—if not, add a bit more distilled vinegar to cover.

Let sit covered at room temperature for at least 4 hours. The longer it sits, the more pungent it will be. Store the pickled cabbage in the refrigerator, where it will keep for 2 to 3 weeks.

Kale, Arugula, and Parsley Tabouli Salad

Tabouli without the cracked wheat . . . why not? Conventions were made to be broken. This fresh, herbal salad is one of the easiest recipes in this book—all you need to do is chop and toss and you’re good to go! Just don’t skimp on the lemon, which gives this salad its signature punch.

Serves 4

4 to 5 cups fresh curly parsley, minced	2 ripe Roma tomatoes, minced
2 cups kale leaves, minced	1 medium English cucumber, minced
1 cup arugula, minced	Juice of 2 lemons
2 cups cauliflower rice	¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
⅓ cup hulled hemp hearts	½ teaspoon salt, or to taste
1 medium red onion, minced	

In a large bowl, toss together the parsley, kale, arugula, cauliflower rice, hemp hearts, onion, tomatoes, and cucumber. Add the lemon juice, oil, and salt and toss to coat. Taste and adjust the salt as needed.

Let rest at room temperature for at 30 minutes on the counter or up to overnight in the refrigerator (the flavors really meld after resting). Serve at room temperature.





Kale, Garlic, and White Bean Soup with Orange Zest

I love a garlic-heavy soup in the winter, especially when it's hearty enough to be a stand-alone meal. And thanks to the beans in this soup, it really delivers. Yes, it's a lot of garlic, so if you're making this as a date-night food, make sure you both enjoy it. And don't skimp on the orange zest—it doesn't make the soup sweet but rounds out the flavor nicely. I've included an option to add sausage, which gives this starter main dish potential!

Serves 4 to 6

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
¼ cup chopped hard chorizo or other
sausage (optional)
1 large yellow onion, diced
1 head garlic, cloves diced
2 tablespoons thyme
1 teaspoon salt, or to taste
1 teaspoon ground black pepper, or to taste
½ teaspoon paprika
Zest and juice of 1 lemon
Zest of 1 orange

2 bunches kale, stems removed, leaves
shredded
2 (15-ounce) cans cannellini or other white
beans*
8 cups chicken bone broth or vegetable
broth

*You could soak and cook dried beans, but this is a good time-saver for a busy night. If starting from dried beans, cook thoroughly before proceeding with the recipe (¾ cup dried beans per can).

Heat the oil in a large heavy-bottomed soup pot over medium heat. Add the chorizo, if using, the onion, and garlic and cook until the onion is tender, about 5 minutes, stirring frequently so the garlic doesn't burn. Add the thyme, salt, pepper, paprika, lemon zest, and orange zest and cook for an additional 1 to 2 minutes, until fragrant.

Add the kale and white beans and cook, stirring, until the kale wilts. Add the broth, bring to a simmer, then reduce the heat, cover, and simmer for 25 minutes. Uncover and cook for an additional 5 to 10 minutes, until kale is very tender and beans are beginning to fall apart. Add the lemon juice and serve.

Shrimp and Roasted Veggie Salad

I get bored easily (what can I say? I'm a Gemini). That's why, when constructing a salad, I always make sure there's a variety of chopped veggies that'll keep every bite interesting. This salad is perfectly balanced, thanks to the fresh herbs, tangy, creamy dressing, and ample nutty roasted veggies rounding out each bite. Plus, it's on an arugula base, which means that this entire salad is a nitrate powerhouse. Chew slowly and enjoy this salad's targeted blood pressure benefits.

Serves 4

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided, plus more for the pan	2 zucchinis, diced
2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley	2 cups bite-sized broccoli florets (1/2 large head)
2 tablespoons minced fresh rosemary	1 cup cherry tomatoes
2 cloves garlic, minced	2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard	1 avocado, chopped
1 pound shrimp, peeled and deveined (tail-on is OK)	Juice of 1 lime
1 large red onion, finely chopped	1 jalapeño, seeds removed
1 bunch asparagus, ends removed, cut into bite-sized pieces	1/4 cup fresh cilantro, roughly chopped
	1 teaspoon salt
	4 cups loosely packed arugula

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Lightly oil a sheet pan.

In a large bowl, whisk together 2 tablespoons of the oil, the parsley, rosemary, garlic, and mustard. Add the shrimp, onion, asparagus, zucchinis, broccoli, and cherry tomatoes to the bowl and toss everything until coated in the olive oil mixture.

Pour the shrimp and veggies onto the sheet pan and spread in an even layer. Roast for 15 to 20 minutes, until the shrimp is cooked through and the veggies are tender.

While the shrimp is roasting, make the dressing: In a blender, combine the remaining 1 tablespoon oil, the vinegar, avocado, lime juice, jalapeño, cilantro, and salt and blend until smooth.

Place the arugula on a serving tray and arrange the roasted veggies on top. Drizzle with the avocado dressing and serve.





Olive Oil Mashed Celery Root

I know, I know. Everybody loves mashed potatoes, which—sorry to ruin the party—are usually fat and starch bombs. This mashed celery root mixture (which does include a sweet potato) is the perfect healthier swap-in. It's flavored with a combination of simmered garlic and toasty garlic oil without added dairy, and it's a super versatile side for meat-based dishes, garlicky shrimp, or even with eggs for breakfast.

Serves 4

2 large celery roots, peeled and diced
1 medium white sweet potato, peeled and diced
2 cups chicken bone broth or vegetable broth, plus more as needed

1 head garlic, cloves peeled, divided
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more as needed
Salt and ground white pepper

Place the celery roots, sweet potato, broth, and 5 or 6 cloves of garlic in a large saucepan, making sure the broth covers the vegetables all the way. Place over high heat and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to maintain a simmer and simmer until very tender, 25 to 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, heat the remaining garlic in the oil over low heat and cook until the garlic is tender, about 8 to 10 minutes.

Drain the cooked veggies, transfer to a food processor, and process until smooth, streaming in the garlicky oil and garlic cloves through the hole in the lid as you go until a light, fluffy mash is formed. Season with salt and pepper and serve.

Olive Oil–Poached Carrots and Carrot Sauce

It might seem a bit unusual to poach carrots, but it really concentrates their flavor, imparting earthy, sweet, and slightly creamy qualities. As an added bonus, you end up with a super-flavorful carrot oil—so don't throw out that cooking oil! Save it to make the sauce below to blend into a vinaigrette or to saute veggies in.

Serves 4

1½ pounds small carrots, peeled, with tops on	1 sprig thyme
3 cups extra-virgin olive oil, plus more if needed	1 teaspoon whole black peppercorns
1 shallot, thinly sliced	1½ teaspoons salt
2 cloves garlic, roughly chopped	¼ cup roughly torn fresh mint

To turn carrots into carrot sauce:

1 cup chopped oil-poached carrots (see above)	¼ cup canned unsweetened coconut milk
¼ cup poaching oil (see above)	¼ cup nutritional yeast
½ teaspoon salt	¼ teaspoon mild curry powder

Preheat the oven to 300°F.

Place the carrots in a large baking dish in a single layer. Cover with the oil, making sure the oil goes at least ½ inch over the carrots. Add the shallot, garlic, thyme, and peppercorns and bake for 45 minutes to 1 hour, until the carrots are very tender and the oil reaches 240°F.

Carefully remove the carrots from the oil, saving the oil (see below).

Chop the carrots into bite-sized pieces, add the salt, and toss with the mint before serving, or skip the mint and turn the carrots into carrot sauce.

TO TURN BRAISED CARROTS INTO SAUCE:

In a high-speed blender, combine the carrots, carrot poaching oil, salt, coconut milk, nutritional yeast, and curry powder and blend until smooth and creamy.

Serve as a dipping sauce for vegetables, to saute vegetables in, as the base of a red wine vinaigrette, or as a sauce for seafood, poultry, or lamb.





Seared Salmon Ceviche in Endive Cups

A while back I got hooked on the shrimp ceviche tacos served at a restaurant in LA, and I was inspired to try a healthier twist on the classic. Look for sashimi-grade salmon at a reputable fishmonger or a well-stocked Asian grocery store in your area. If you can't find sashimi-grade salmon, consider lightly cooking your fish (to about 120°F) and then relying on the marinade to "cook" it further. Can't find endive? Use butter or Bibb lettuce leaves instead.

Serves 4

2 heads Belgian endive	1 medium-sized ripe mango, diced
1 pound sashimi-grade salmon fillets, skin removed	1 small ripe tomato, diced
1 teaspoon salt, divided	1 jalapeño, minced
½ teaspoon ground cumin	Juice of 3 limes
½ teaspoon ground black pepper	Juice of 1 lemon
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided	2 large avocados, diced
1 small red onion, diced	¾ cup fresh cilantro leaves

Carefully separate the heads of the endive into individual leaf "cups" and set aside.

Season the salmon with ½ teaspoon of the salt, the cumin, and black pepper.

Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil over medium-high heat. Add the salmon and cook for 1 to 2 minutes, until a golden brown crust forms (it will not be cooked through—this is a raw preparation). Remove the salmon from the heat and let it come to room temperature. Dice the salmon and transfer to a bowl. Add the remaining 1 tablespoon oil, the remaining ½ teaspoon salt, the red onion, mango, tomato, jalapeño, lime juice, and lemon juice. Toss to combine, then let rest in the refrigerator for 10 to 15 minutes, until the salmon starts to lighten and go opaque around the edges. Gently fold in the avocados and cilantro, being careful not to crush them.

Spoon into the endive cups and serve immediately. Because this is a raw preparation, it is important to eat it right away or to keep it chilled until serving (no more than a couple hours after preparing).



CHAPTER 5

MAINS

These mains are hearty and savory and contain ample protein and micronutrients. They'll leave you feeling like a million bucks. Pair with sides from the previous chapter or let them fly solo—either way your mouth and body will be delighted!

Bacalao with Sweet Potatoes, Onions, Peppers, and Leafy Greens

My mother had just a handful of signature dishes that she'd make for me, and this is one of them, which gives it a special place in my heart. This is a variation on a traditional Portuguese bacalao (salted codfish) dish that calls for potatoes and plenty of olive oil. In this variation, I swapped the traditional white potatoes for sweet potatoes, which add a delicious contrast to the salty fish and briny olives. For an added kick, sprinkle with a little red wine vinegar just before serving.

Serves 4

1 pound bacalao (salt cod)*
2 cups white sweet potato, peeled and sliced in 1/4 inch rounds**
3/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil, divided, plus more for the pan
2 medium-sized yellow onions, thinly sliced
4 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
1 cup roughly chopped sweet green bell pepper
1/4 cup roughly chopped jalapeño peppers, seeds and stems removed
4 cups shredded kale leaves
1 pinch salt, or to taste
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder

1/2 teaspoon sweet paprika
1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika
1/2 cup kalamata olives, pitted
1/2 cup roughly chopped fresh parsley

*Bacalao is a salted cod traditional to Spanish, Portuguese, and Brazilian cuisine. It is available in many specialty and gourmet shops and also on Amazon. If you can't find bacalao, try this dish with smoked trout—skip the soaking in the first step. The flavor won't be the same, but it still will be incredibly delicious.

**If you can't find white sweet potatoes, it's fine to use orange sweet potatoes.

Soak the bacalao in a large bowl of water for 24 to 36 hours, changing the water occasionally (at least six changes of water). Drain.

Break the bacalao into flakes, removing any large bones. Set aside.

Put the sweet potatoes in a large pot and cover with water. Bring to a boil and cook over medium heat for about 20 minutes, until tender. Drain and rinse under cold water.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Lightly brush a large baking dish with oil and set aside.

Meanwhile, in a large saute pan, heat 1/4 cup of the oil over medium heat. Add the onions and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until tender. Add the garlic and peppers and con-

tinue to cook, stirring occasionally, until the peppers are tender, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the kale and salt and cook until the kale is just wilted, 1 to 2 minutes.

In a small bowl, stir together remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ cup oil with the garlic powder, sweet paprika, and smoked paprika. Pour the seasoned oil over the flaked fish mixture and toss to coat.

Spread half of the potatoes over the baking dish. Add half of the vegetable mixture and half of the bacalao. Repeat the layering and top the final layer of bacalao with the olives. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, until lightly browned and warmed through. Top with the parsley and serve.





Simmered Ginger Salmon with Daikon Radish and Greens

Inspired by traditional nimono, or Japanese simmered dishes, this features an interesting combination of sweetness from the radish and miso, richness from the salmon, and a bit of a bite from the mustard greens. It's great over sauteed cauliflower rice.

Serves 4

1 small daikon radish root (about 1 pound), cut into bite-sized chunks	1 pound skinless salmon, cut into large chunks
4 cups water	2 cups roughly chopped napa cabbage
4 tablespoons white or red miso paste	2 cups roughly chopped mustard greens
1 (3-inch) chunk ginger, peeled and roughly chopped	Hot sauce (chili garlic sauce is great for this)
	Coconut aminos or tamari sauce

Put the daikon in a pot with a tight-fitting lid. Add the water and miso paste and cook over medium heat, stirring frequently, until the daikon is tender and the miso is dissolved, about 20 minutes. Add the ginger and cook for an additional 5 minutes, or until fragrant.

Add the salmon, cabbage, and mustard greens to the pot and bring to a simmer. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer for 10 to 12 minutes, until the greens are wilted and the salmon begins to flake. Taste and adjust the heat with hot sauce or the salt/umami with coconut aminos. Serve as is or over sauteed cauliflower rice.

Olive and Olive Oil–Braised Chicken and Greens with Orange and Fennel

Fennel, apples, oranges, and olives are the perfect flavor combination, whether raw or cooked, and the hint of ginger adds a bit of unexpected heat. I love braising chicken this way, not just because you get a great one-pot meal, but because the flavors of all the vegetables meld beautifully, making a vegetable “sauce” for your chicken.

Serves 4

4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided	1 tablespoon minced garlic (2 to 3 cloves)
4 skin-on chicken thighs	1 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 teaspoon salt, divided	1 teaspoon cumin seeds
2 whole leeks, cleaned and thinly sliced	1 teaspoon paprika
1 bulb fennel, cored and thinly sliced (discard fronds)	3 cups shredded mustard greens or collard green leaves
1 Granny Smith apple, peeled, cored, and cubed	3 large oranges, cut into segments
1 tablespoon minced fresh ginger	1 cup pitted green olives in brine

Preheat the oven to 375°F.

In a large oven-safe saucepan, heat 2 tablespoons of the oil over medium-high heat. Season the chicken thighs with a pinch of the salt and transfer to the pan skin-side down. Cook for 5 to 7 minutes, until the skin is very golden brown and crisp, then remove from the heat to a plate and set aside (the chicken should not be fully cooked at this point).

Add the leeks, fennel, and apple to the pan and season with the remaining salt. Increase the heat to high and cook for 6 to 7 minutes, until leeks and fennel are very tender. Add the ginger, garlic, black pepper, cumin seeds, and paprika and cook for an additional 2 to 3 minutes, until very fragrant. Add the greens and cook until they are thoroughly wilted, about 4 to 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and fold in the oranges, olives, and olive brine.

Return the chicken to the pan skin-side up. Transfer to the oven and cook for 30 to 35 minutes, until the chicken is falling-off-the-bone tender. Remove from the oven and serve.





Bone Broth Beef Stew with Purple Sweet Potatoes

A good stew warms the soul, so what could be better than that? A bone broth stew that combines the silky mouthfeel of collagenous broth with butter-soft beef cubes. I've added purple sweet potatoes to balance out the savory beef and lend a hit of heart-healthy potassium and brain-boosting anthocyanins. If you can't find purple sweet potatoes, feel free to use the usual orange; it'll be just as delicious!

Serves 4

4 teaspoons salt	3 cloves garlic, minced
1½ pounds boneless beef chuck, cut into 1-inch cubes	2 tablespoons tamari sauce (coconut aminos can also be used)
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil	1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
3 cups beef bone broth	2 tablespoons tomato paste
4 medium carrots, chopped	1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 medium yellow onion, diced	2 teaspoons dried thyme
1 pound purple sweet potatoes, cut into bite-sized pieces	2 teaspoons paprika
	½ teaspoon ground black pepper

Season the beef all over with 3 teaspoons of the salt.

Heat the oil in a large soup pot and sear the beef until evenly browned on all sides, about 10 minutes.

Add the bone broth, carrots, onion, sweet potatoes, garlic, tamari, vinegar, tomato paste, oregano, thyme, paprika, black pepper, and the remaining 1 teaspoon salt and stir well. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce the heat to maintain a low simmer and cook covered for 1½ hours. Remove from the heat, let cool slightly, and serve.

Bangin' Liver

This is a recipe from my amazing friend Mary Shenouda, aka @PaleoChef on Instagram. She's a private performance chef to elite athletes and entertainers and believes liver is a superfood. Of course, I concur! I'd never tasted chicken liver before trying Mary's dish years ago, but it made me and makes anyone I cook it for an instant convert. It is easy to prepare, utterly delicious, and I promise you'll feel charged up after eating it from the many nutrients it contains, including choline, vitamin B₁₂, folate, and vitamins A and K₂.

Serves 2 to 3

1 pound chicken livers, cleaned and roughly chopped
3/4 teaspoon salt
1/3 cup ghee, plus more for serving
6 cloves garlic, minced
1 large green bell pepper, chopped
1 jalapeño, seeded and chopped

1 tablespoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
1/4 teaspoon ground cardamom
Juice of 1 lime, plus more for serving
2 tablespoons fresh cilantro, chopped



Sprinkle the livers with the salt, give them a toss, and set aside for 2 to 3 minutes.

Heat the ghee in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the liver and sear until browned on both sides, about 4 minutes per side. Add the garlic, bell pepper, and jalapeño and cook until the vegetables are starting to soften, about 5 minutes. Add the cumin, cinnamon, ginger, cloves, and cardamom, reduce the heat to medium-low, cover, and cook for another 5 to 8 minutes, until a thermometer inserted into the thickest part reaches 160 degrees.

Add the lime juice and scrape up any browned bits from the bottom of the pan, mixing them in. Remove from the heat. Serve with an additional hit of melted ghee, a touch of lime juice, and cilantro to garnish.

Ghee-Seared Beef Liver

I consider beef liver to be a superfood, loaded with vitamin A, B vitamins, selenium, vitamin K₂, and copper. Unfortunately, for most who've attempted to make it, cooking beef liver is not very intuitive, and the results can quickly ruin a first impression. Well-cooked liver should have a nice, crispy crust on the outside but remain rare on the inside, lending it an almost creamy texture. Using a generous hit of salt, an acid (like lemon), and ghee really softens the strong flavor of liver, making it delicious. I try to eat a few ounces of liver every week, and this is my go-to recipe!

Serves 1

4 ounces beef liver

1 tablespoon ghee

1½ teaspoons coarse or fine salt

¼ lemon

Sprinkle the salt on both sides of the liver. A generous, evenly distributed pinch on each side should do.

Heat the ghee in a pan over high heat. Once the pan is very hot, place the liver in the pan and cook for about 1 minute, until when you peek on the bottom you see a nice sear developing. Flip the liver and sear the other side for about another minute. If the liver is browned but has not yet developed a slight "crust," flip it again and cook until it has.

Remove from the heat and let sit for 2 minutes. Slice the liver, squeeze the lemon over it, and serve.

Insanely Crispy Gluten-Free Buffalo Chicken Wings

Most chicken wings are unhealthy—feedlot animal parts fried in unhealthy oils and breaded with refined flour (yuck!). These, however, are baked, grain-free, and full of nutrients. Chicken skin is full of collagen, as are the cartilage-rich joints of the chicken wing. Plus, dark meat chicken is a great source of heart-healthy vitamin K₂. When shopping for your hot sauce, make sure that it contains only red pepper, vinegar, salt, and garlic.

Serves 2 to 3

Softened or melted coconut oil	1/2 cup hot sauce (I like Frank's RedHot Original Cayenne Pepper Sauce)
1 pound chicken wings	2 tablespoons butter
Garlic salt (I like Redmond Real Salt Organic Garlic Salt)	Cayenne pepper (optional)

Preheat the oven to 250°F and grease a sheet pan with coconut oil.

Place the wings on the prepared sheet and sprinkle with garlic salt. Give them a nice even seasoning (one side is fine).

Bake the wings for 45 minutes. Why such a low temperature? It helps dry out the wings and melts away extra fat and connective tissue. Very important! (Note: the wings are not done after this step—do not eat yet!)

Turn the heat up to 425°F and bake for another 45 minutes, or until the wings have a nice golden brown color and have shrunk considerably. Remove from the oven and let sit at room temperature for 5 minutes.

While the wings are resting, combine the hot sauce, butter, and extra cayenne, if using, in a small saucepan over very low heat just to warm the hot sauce and melt the butter.

Whisk the wing sauce, then transfer to a large bowl or pot. Throw in the wings, toss well to coat them with the sauce, and serve.





Olive Oil Lamb Chops with Olives and Artichoke Hearts

Lamb and artichokes are a classic combination for a great reason—the gaminess of the lamb pairs beautifully with the briney artichoke hearts. The tomatoes add a nice burst of sweetness to this super flavorful dish, and the chile flakes add just a bit of heat without making this hearty dinner too spicy. Okey dokey, artichokey!

Serves 4

4 lamb shoulder chops (½ inch thick)	1 (14-ounce) can artichoke heart quarters, drained and thoroughly dried
1½ teaspoons salt, divided	1 cup cherry tomatoes
1 teaspoon ground black pepper	Juice of 1 lemon
4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil	1 cup pitted niçoise olives
1 red onion, thinly sliced	About 1 cup chicken bone broth, plus more as needed
4 cloves garlic, thinly sliced	¼ cup minced fresh parsley
2 tablespoons minced fresh rosemary	
½ teaspoon red chile flakes	
3 tablespoons tomato paste	

Season the lamb chops front and back with ½ teaspoon of the salt and the black pepper.

Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a pan over medium-high heat, add the lamb chops, and sear for 2 to 3 minutes per side for medium-rare. Remove from the pan to a plate.

Add the remaining 2 tablespoons oil to the pan along with the onion, garlic, rosemary, and chile flakes and cook for 3 to 5 minutes, until the onion is tender and the mixture is very fragrant.

Add the tomato paste and artichoke hearts and cook, stirring frequently, until the artichoke hearts are browned and the tomato paste is slightly toasted, about 8 minutes. Add the cherry tomatoes, lemon juice, olives, and ⅓ cup of the chicken broth and stir to combine. Bring to a simmer and simmer for 5 to 10 minutes, adding broth as needed until a flavorful sauce has formed and the cherry tomatoes are bursting.

Season with the remaining 1 teaspoon salt and sprinkle with the parsley. Serve each lamb chop with a generous helping of the vegetable mixture.

Beef Picadillo

I lived in Miami, a hub of epic Cuban food, for four years and couldn't get enough of a good picadillo. Here's a healthy variation on this traditional dish that I make often. It goes great over sauteed cauliflower rice or, if you really want to keep the vampires away, garlicky zucchini noodles.

Serves 2 to 3

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
1 large yellow onion, finely chopped
4 cloves garlic, smashed and peeled
1 pound ground beef
1 teaspoon salt

1½ teaspoons ground black pepper
¼ teaspoon red chile flakes (optional)
½ cup no-added-sugar tomato sauce
½ cup pitted green olives, sliced (olives stuffed with pimientos are fine)

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and cook for 4 to 5 minutes, until softened. Throw in the smashed garlic and allow to aromatize for 1 minute. Add the ground beef, throw on the salt, pepper, and red chile flakes, if using, and cook, stirring often to break it up, until browned, about 10 minutes. Add the tomato sauce and olives, bring to a simmer, then reduce the heat to very low and simmer for 10 minutes. Serve.





Garlicky Olive Oil Shrimp

My mom wasn't kosher but did have some food rules derived from her faith. For one, she never knowingly allowed shrimp in the house. Unfortunately, that never stopped me or my brothers from sneaking it in (sorry, Mom). The delicious taste and texture provided by crustaceans like shrimp is simply undeniable, surpassed only by the nutrition they offer. This recipe is sort of a cross between New Orleans-style barbecue shrimp and a classic Italian American shrimp scampi, in all the best ways. It's strongly spiced, nice and garlicky, and perfect over sauteed cauliflower rice or, if you really like garlic, zucchini noodles.

Serves 4

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil

1 head garlic, cloves thinly sliced

1 1/2 pounds large shrimp, peeled and deveined (tail-on is OK) *

1 teaspoon salt

1 tablespoon Old Bay seasoning

1/2 teaspoon paprika

Zest and juice of 1 lemon

1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley

1/4 cup nutritional yeast

*If using frozen, make sure to thaw completely before cooking.

Place the oil and garlic in a large saute pan over medium heat and cook, stirring occasionally, until the garlic is very fragrant and light golden brown, about 2 minutes. Remove the garlic from the oil using a slotted spoon.

Turn the heat up to high, add the shrimp to the oil, and cook for 1 to 2 minutes, until shrimp is just beginning to look opaque. Reduce the heat to medium and add the salt, Old Bay, paprika, and lemon zest. Cook for an additional 1 to 2 minutes, until the shrimp are *just* cooked (you don't want them to get tough). Add the lemon juice, parsley, and nutritional yeast, then toss with the crispy garlic and serve.

Perfect Ribs

Ever since I was a teenager, I’ve adored a good rack of ribs. Smoky, fatty, sweet, and salty—is there anything more decadent? Unfortunately, it’s hard to find ribs that aren’t also covered in a sugary sauce. Like any collagen-rich body part, the key to making ribs that melt in your mouth is to cook them slow, which ensures that the collagen will melt down to gelatin. Gelatin is what gives ribs (and properly cooked chicken drumsticks, lamb shoulder, or any other joint) that silky, moist texture. For these ribs, I’ve created a rub combining sweet and savory—but without the sugar—that’s so good you won’t even need sauce. You can also use this rub on pork tenderloin, roasted chicken, salmon, or any other protein your heart desires.

EPIC RIB RUB

Makes about ¼ cup of rub

1½ teaspoons sugar-free “brown” sweetener*
1½ teaspoons garlic powder
1½ teaspoons onion powder
1½ teaspoons chili powder
1½ teaspoons smoked paprika
½ teaspoon ground black pepper
¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 teaspoon salt

* For this recipe, I use Lakanto brand Golden monk fruit sweetener. If you can’t find it, look for a sugar-free brown sugar equivalent. Otherwise, regular “white” monk fruit sweetener is fine. This assumes a one-to-one sweetness ratio of sugar to sugar alternative. Make sure that whatever sweetener you use, the sweetness equivalent is to 1½ teaspoons sugar.

In a small bowl, combine the sweetener, garlic powder, onion powder, chili powder, smoked paprika, black pepper, cayenne pepper, and salt. Mix well.

EPIC RIBS

Serves 2 to 3

Epic Rib Rub

1 rack baby back ribs

Preheat the oven to 275°F and line a sheet pan with parchment paper.

Rub the ribs down with the rub on the outwardly curving side, leaving ample sitting on top.

Place on the prepared sheet pan outwardly curving-side up and bake uncovered for 3½ hours, until meat is tender, and rib bones come away from meat when pulled firmly.

Note: Some people like to remove the membrane on the underside of the ribs, but I don't mind it, and I find it adds a fun texture. But if you'd like truly fall-off-the-bone ribs, before seasoning, flip the ribs over, identify the membrane, slide a dinner knife under it to release, and then peel off.



Coconut Braised Chicken Thighs with Mustard Greens and Cauliflower

I love chicken thighs; not only are they one of the more flavorful parts of the chicken, they're economical and provide nutritional benefits not found in the breast. Namely, they're a great source of collagen as well as vitamin K₂ (chicken dark meat contains six times the vitamin K₂ of breast meat). The sweetness of the coconut milk plays perfectly with the sharp bite from the greens, rounding out this hearty braise. Cauliflower adds body to the dish, making it an ideal one-pan meal for a busy evening.

Serves 4

2 tablespoons avocado oil	1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric
4 skin-on chicken thighs	1/2 teaspoon paprika
1 teaspoon salt, divided	1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
4 cloves garlic, roughly chopped	1 bunch mustard greens, stems removed, leaves very thinly sliced
2 leeks, cleaned and thinly sliced	1 (15-ounce) can full-fat unsweetened coconut milk
1 medium-sized head cauliflower, cut into small florets	2 tablespoons unsweetened coconut flakes (optional)
Zest and juice of 1 lemon	
1 teaspoon ground black pepper	

Preheat the oven to 375°F.

In a large oven-safe saucepan, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Season the chicken thighs with a pinch of the salt and place in the hot pan skin-side down. Cook 5 for 7 minutes, until the skin is very golden brown and crispy, then remove from the pan and set aside on a plate (the chicken should *not* be fully cooked at this point).

Add the garlic, leeks, and cauliflower to the pan, then add the remaining salt, the lemon zest, black pepper, turmeric, paprika, and cumin. Increase the heat to high and cook for 5 to 7 minutes, until the cauliflower begins to crisp around the edges and the leeks are tender. Add the mustard greens and cook until just wilted, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the coconut milk and lemon juice.

Place the chicken skin-side up in the veggie mixture, transfer to the oven, and bake for 30 to 35 minutes, until the chicken is falling-off-the-bone tender. Remove from the oven, sprinkle with coconut flakes, and serve.

Calo Verde (Portuguese-Style Greens and Sausage Stew)

I had the pleasure of visiting Portugal a few years ago and fell in love with the cuisine. This garlicky soup is a twist on a classic. Not only is it delicious, it's a great way to use up hearty greens in your fridge. The combination of greens and sweet potatoes results in a creamy soup studded with crispy, savory sausage. If you love this, definitely try the bacalao.

Serves 4 to 6

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

8 ounces linguica, chorizo, or other hard, garlicky sausage, cut into thin coins

1 medium yellow onion, minced

4 cloves garlic, minced

1 teaspoon salt, or to taste

1½ teaspoons ground black pepper

1 pound white sweet potatoes, peeled and diced *

4 cups water

4 cups chicken bone broth or vegetable broth

1 pound collard greens, stems removed, leaves cut into bite-sized pieces

*You can also use orange sweet potatoes, but white sweet potatoes will keep the finished product a more vibrant green.

In a large heavy-bottomed soup pot, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Add the sausage and cook until crisp, about 4 to 6 minutes, then remove with a slotted spoon to a plate and set aside for later.

Add the onion to the pot and cook, stirring frequently, until tender, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic, salt, black pepper, and sweet potatoes and continue to cook for 3 to 5 minutes more, until the garlic is fragrant. Add the water and broth, bring to a simmer, then reduce the heat to maintain a simmer and cook until the sweet potatoes are tender, 15 to 20 minutes.

Using a hand blender, blend the soup until smooth. Add the collard greens, increase the heat, bring to a boil, and cook until the collard greens are wilted, about 10 minutes. Add the sausage, stir, adjust the seasonings as needed, and serve.



Braised Chicken with Artichokes, Fennel, and Kale

Another dish featuring a few of my favorite classic Mediterranean flavors, this hearty one-pan meal is perfect for a busy worknight dinner. If you're not a fan of fennel, consider substituting celery or thinly sliced leeks—but give this a try first. It's changed a lot of fennel haters' minds, thanks to the addition of tangy artichokes and perfectly crisp-skin chicken.

Serves 4

2 tablespoons avocado oil	Zest and juice of 1 lemon
4 skin-on chicken thighs	1 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 teaspoon salt, divided	1 teaspoon anise seeds
2 medium red onions, thinly sliced	2 tablespoons nutritional yeast
1 bulb fennel, cored and thinly sliced	1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
1 (14-ounce) can quartered artichoke hearts, drained and patted dry	1 bunch kale, stems removed, leaves very thinly sliced
Zest of 1 orange	2 cups chicken bone broth

Preheat the oven to 375°F.

Heat the oil in a large oven-safe saucepan over medium-high heat.

Season the chicken thighs with a pinch of the salt and place in the hot pan skin-side down. Cook for 5 to 7 minutes, until the skin is very golden brown and crisp, then remove from the pan to a plate and set aside (the chicken should *not* be fully cooked at this point).

Add the onions, fennel, and artichoke hearts to the pan and season with the remaining salt. Increase the heat to high and cook for 4 to 5 minutes, until onions and fennel are tender, and artichokes are beginning to brown. Add the orange and lemon zests, the black pepper, and anise seeds and cook for an additional 2 to 3 minutes, until very fragrant. Add the nutritional yeast, mustard, and kale and cook until the mixture is well combined and the kale is wilted, 3 to 5 minutes.

Return the chicken to the veggie mixture skin-side up and carefully pour the broth into the pan, making sure not to cover the skin (you want the skin to crisp back up). Transfer to the oven and bake for 30 to 35 minutes, until the chicken is falling-off-the-bone tender. Remove from the oven, squeeze lemon juice over the vegetables, and serve.

The Perfect Steak

Knowing how to make a steak is essential. It's also so easy to do. This method yields a restaurant-quality steak with the most basic setup: a cast-iron pan. In terms of cut, I love cooking a delicious marbled rib eye or a lean and tender tenderloin (aka filet mignon). No matter your choice, don't cut any fat off the steak; it will come in handy once you start cooking.

Serves 1 to 2

Coarse (kosher) salt

1 steak

1 teaspoon ghee or avocado oil*

1 pinch flake salt

* If you're cooking a fatty steak, you do not need to add any oil to the pan. A leaner cut (tenderloin, for example) would require some oil in the pan.

Set your steak on the countertop to allow it to come to room temperature, usually about 30 minutes. Just before cooking, blot steak on all sides with a paper towel to dry the surface. Any water on the steak's exterior will prevent a great crust from forming.

Set a cast-iron pan over high heat and allow it to get very hot. If you're using oil, put it in the pan before heating. If your steak has a fat cap, put that side down on the pan first (holding the steak upright with tongs) and let it cook for 1 minute. This will render out some of the beef's own fat to cook on. Spread the fat around the pan.

Place the steak flat on the pan and sprinkle evenly with coarse salt, saving an equal amount for the other side. Allow it to develop a nice crust, typically 2 to 3 minutes. Flip the steak. Continue to flip until you get a nice, even sear.

Gently poke top of the steak with your finger (careful!—it'll be hot). For medium-rare, the steak should feel like the skin at the base of your thumb when touching your thumb to your middle finger. If it's softer, cook it a little more. (You can also use an instant-read thermometer; aim for an internal temperature of 125°F for medium-rare and then pull from direct heat).

Remove from the pan, place on a cutting board, and allow the steak to rest for 5 to 7 minutes. Slice and finish with flake salt.

Note: For a simple Tuscan variation, before finishing with the flake salt, drizzle with 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil and ½ teaspoon balsamic vinegar.



“Pattyless” Jamaican Beef Patty

When I was a kid in New York, one of my absolute favorite after-school snacks was the Jamaican beef patties I’d buy from the local pizza shops. Delicious as they were, they probably were loaded with trans fats, refined grains, and industrial oils. Here, I’ve re-created the seasoning of the beef, and the nutritional yeast lends the flavor of the warm, doughy crust. This is one nourishing dish and goes great with my “Cheesy” Kale Salad.

Serves 2 to 3

1 teaspoon ghee	1/2 teaspoon ground coriander
1/2 medium yellow onion, chopped	1/2 teaspoon ground allspice
5 cloves garlic, smashed and peeled	1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom
1 pound ground beef	1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 teaspoon salt	1/4 cup nutritional yeast (optional but recommended)
1 tablespoon ground cumin	
1 1/2 teaspoons ground turmeric	

Heat the ghee in medium skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and cook for 4 to 5 minutes, until softened. Throw in the smashed garlic and allow to aromatize for 1 minute.

Add the ground beef, throw on the salt and all the spices, and cook, stirring often to break it up, until the beef is browned, about 10 minutes. Sprinkle on the nutritional yeast and serve.

Simple Burger Patty

To make the best burger you've ever had, less is more. Instead of mixing salt, spices, and, God forbid, raw veggies into your ground beef (you really expect raw onions to cook and caramelize in the middle of a patty?), you're going to sprinkle salt on the surface of your patty just before grilling. Here's why: salt changes the texture of the protein in meat, and mixing it in before grilling will give your burger a more sausage- or meatball-like consistency. This recipe really lets the meat be the star and is one of my staple recipes, because a burger patty can be thrown on top of any salad or greens dish to complete the meal. Plus, 100% grass-fed ground beef is so economical. When cooking fatty meat like ground beef, you won't need to add oil to the pan provided it's very hot when you put the meat in.

Serves 2 to 4

1 pound ground beef (85 percent lean
or higher)

1 tablespoon coarse salt

Set a large skillet over medium-high heat.

Form the beef into 2 to 4 burger patties (the size is up to you), making the patties as flat as possible. Add a small indent in the center with your thumb (this helps them hold their shape).

Sprinkle the salt on each side of the patties, keeping your fingers about 8 inches above the patties to ensure even distribution and no salty "hot" spots.

Place the patties in the hot pan and cook for 4 to 5 minutes, then flip and cook for an additional 3 to 4 minutes, until outside of burger is crisp and brown all over. Serve on a bed of greens, or just eat as is.





Lemongrass Salmon Banh Mi Bowl

Vietnamese food is among my favorite cuisines. Inspired by the classic sandwich, this bowl features a delicious blend of fresh, tangy, sweet, and spicy flavors to keep your taste buds excited for every bite. As an alternative, it's worth trying it with grass-fed beef or pasture-raised pork instead of the salmon—and you can pickle any vegetable you'd like along with the carrots, shallot, and jalapeño—radishes, broccoli stems, even garlic work beautifully.

Serves 2

¾ cup rice vinegar, divided	1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger
2 tablespoons monk fruit sweetener, divided	2 tablespoons avocado mayonnaise
2 tablespoons coconut aminos or tamari	1 tablespoon hot sauce
2 medium carrots, cut into matchsticks	Juice of 1 lime
1 large shallot, thinly sliced	4 cups mixed greens
1 jalapeño, thinly sliced	1 avocado, thinly sliced
8 ounces skin-on salmon fillet	¼ cup minced fresh parsley
1 stalk lemongrass, crushed and finely chopped	¼ cup minced fresh cilantro

First, make the pickled veggies: Heat ½ cup of the vinegar, 1 tablespoon of the monk fruit, and the coconut aminos in a small saucepan over medium heat. Add the carrots, shallot, and jalapeño, stir, and remove from the heat. Let sit for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 375°F. Place the salmon in an oven-safe dish.

In a small bowl, whisk together remaining ¼ cup vinegar, remaining 1 tablespoon monk fruit, the lemongrass, and ginger. Pour the mixture over the salmon and bake for 15 to 18 minutes, until the salmon is tender and flakes with a fork. Let the salmon cool to room temperature.

Right before serving, make a quick sauce by whisking together the avocado mayonnaise, hot sauce, and lime juice in a small bowl.

Serve the salmon over the greens garnished with the pickled veggies, avocado, and fresh herbs. Drizzle the sauce over the top or serve it on the side.

Spice-Rubbed Salmon with Almond Basil Pesto

There are a million variations on pesto out there, including a few in this book. This particular recipe, utilizing almonds, goes especially well with salmon. The arugula adds a nice peppery bite, and the tang of the lemon zest pairs beautifully with the salmon. Any leftover pesto can be tossed with sweet potato noodles, stirred into your favorite dressing, or used to top steamed broccoli.

Serves 2 to 4

For the pesto:

2 cups fresh basil leaves
1 cup arugula leaves
2 cloves garlic, peeled
1/2 cup toasted almonds

Zest of 1 lemon
1/2 teaspoon salt, or to taste
3/4 cup nutritional yeast
1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil

For the salmon:

1 pound skin-on salmon fillets, cut into 4 equal pieces
2 tablespoons avocado oil, divided
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper

1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon paprika
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
1/2 batch pesto (see above)

TO MAKE THE PESTO:

In a food processor, pulse together the basil, arugula, garlic, almonds, lemon zest, salt, and nutritional yeast until well combined. With the motor running, gradually stream the oil in through the hole on the top until all the oil is incorporated. Taste and add more salt as needed.

You can store the pesto in a covered container in the refrigerator for up to 1 week or in the freezer for up to 6 months.

TO MAKE THE SALMON:

Preheat the oven to 400°F.

Spread 1 tablespoon of the oil over the salmon.

In a small bowl, stir together the salt, black pepper, cumin, paprika, and cloves. Coat the meat (non-skin) side of the salmon with the spice mixture.

Heat the remaining 1 tablespoon oil in an oven-safe skillet over medium-high heat. Add the salmon to the pan skin-side down and cook until the skin is crispy and easily releases from the pan, about 5 minutes.

Transfer to the oven and bake for 15 minutes. Remove from the oven and spoon half of the pesto over the salmon. Return to the oven and bake for 5 minutes, or until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the salmon reads 125°F. Serve with the remaining pesto.

Miso Sesame Roasted Salmon with Broccoli, Garlic, and Cabbage

I'm a big fan of sheet pan suppers for their simplicity—they're great weeknight meals, they don't lead to a huge cleanup, and when they're made using a super flavorful, savory marinade like this one, they're downright addictive. This recipe was inspired by the shrimp broccoli at a local Chinese restaurant, and is great with cauliflower rice if you find you need a little something extra.

Serves 2 to 4

1/3 cup miso paste (white or red works best)
2 tablespoons coconut aminos or tamari sauce
1 tablespoon rice vinegar
2 tablespoons monk fruit sweetener
3 tablespoons grated fresh ginger, divided
2 skin-on salmon fillets (about 8 ounces each)

2 cups bite-sized broccoli florets (1/2 large head)
1/2 small head red cabbage, cored and chopped into bite-sized chunks
1 head garlic, cloves roughly chopped
2 tablespoons sesame oil
1/2 cup thinly sliced scallions
1 tablespoon sesame seeds

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Line a rimmed sheet pan with parchment (optional, but makes for easier cleanup) and set aside.

In a small bowl, whisk together the miso paste, coconut aminos, vinegar, monk fruit, and 2 tablespoons of the ginger.

Place the salmon skin-side down on sheet pan and brush with half of the miso mixture. Reserve the remaining sauce.

In a large bowl, toss together the broccoli, cabbage, and garlic. Add the oil and remaining 1 tablespoon ginger and toss to coat the veggies. Scatter the vegetable mixture around the salmon on the sheet pan.

Bake for 20 minutes, or until the salmon is cooked through (it should flake easily with a fork) and the veggies are tender. Remove from the oven and toss the veggies with the remaining miso mixture. Sprinkle with the scallions and sesame seeds and serve.



Braised Lamb with Broccoli Salsa in Butter Lettuce “Tortillas”

These tacos are inspired by traditional barbacoa—rich, spiced braised lamb. I’ve made the less-than-traditional choice to pair these delicious tacos with a broccoli-based salsa to add much-wanted crunch, and creamy coconut yogurt for tang. If broccoli rice isn’t available in your grocery store, simply pulse the stems of broccoli in a food processor until broken into rice-sized pieces.

Serves 4

For the lamb:

Juice of ½ tangerine	3 tablespoons sesame oil
Zest and juice of 1 lime	1 large red onion, sliced
1 teaspoon ground cumin	3 cups chicken bone broth or vegetable broth
½ teaspoon ground cloves	1 sprig rosemary
4 cloves garlic, crushed	1 stick cinnamon
1 teaspoon salt	1 sprig oregano
2 canned chipotles, chopped (from a can of chipotles in adobo)	Canned unsweetened coconut milk (optional)
1 pound lamb stew meat, cut into 1-inch cubes	

For the broccoli salsa:

2 cups broccoli rice	1 clove garlic, crushed
1 large red bell pepper, diced	Juice of 1 lime
1 jalapeño, diced	Juice of 1 lemon
1 Roma tomato, diced	¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
2 large red onions, diced	½ teaspoon salt
¼ cup minced fresh cilantro	

For serving:

1 head butter lettuce, leaves separated	2 tablespoons nutritional yeast
1 cup plain unsweetened coconut yogurt	Lime wedges

TO MAKE THE LAMB:

In a large bowl, combine the tangerine juice, lime juice, lime zest, cumin, cloves, garlic, salt, and chipotles. Add the lamb, stir to coat in the spice mixture, cover, and marinate in the refrigerator for at least 3 hours or as long as overnight.

In a large pot, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the onion and cook until tender, 2 to 3 minutes, then increase heat to medium high, add the lamb, and sear on all sides, ½ minute per side. Add the broth, rosemary, cinnamon, and oregano and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer for 1 hour.

Remove the lid from lamb and continue to cook until the liquid thickens and the lamb is easy to shred with a fork, about 40 minutes. Shred the lamb, taste, and adjust the salt if needed; if it's too spicy, thin it with a little coconut milk.

TO MAKE THE BROCCOLI SALSA:

While the lamb is cooking, combine all the salsa ingredients in a large bowl and let rest at room temperature for 30 minutes. Refrigerate until needed.

TO SERVE:

Assemble your tacos using lettuce leaves as the base. Fill each leaf with shredded lamb, then top with salsa, a drizzle of coconut yogurt, and a sprinkle of nutritional yeast. Serve with lime wedges.

Salmon, Bok Choy, and Herbs in Coconut Broth

Thai food provides a cornucopia of exciting flavors, balancing sweet, salty, spicy, and acidic. I'm especially enamored with the Thai coconut-based soup tom kha kai, which I must try in any new Thai restaurant I visit. Here's a Thai-inspired poached salmon in a broth that's so flavorful you'll want to drink it on its own. It's delicious served as is, over cauliflower rice, or over mashed sweet potatoes for a heartier dish.

Serves 4

4 (6-ounce) skinless salmon fillets	2 (15-ounce) cans full-fat unsweetened coconut milk
1 teaspoon salt	1 teaspoon monk fruit sweetener
2 tablespoons sesame oil	4 cups sliced bok choy
1 large shallot, thinly sliced	1 bunch green onions, finely chopped
5 cloves garlic, thinly sliced	¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
1 (3-inch) piece ginger, peeled and cut into matchsticks	1 cup lightly torn fresh Thai basil leaves
1 jalapeño, finely diced (optional)	Coconut aminos or tamari sauce

Season the salmon with the salt and set aside.

Heat the oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add the shallot, garlic, ginger, and jalapeño and cook, stirring frequently, until the shallot is tender and the mixture is very fragrant, 3 to 5 minutes. Add the coconut milk and monk fruit, bring to a simmer, then reduce the heat to maintain a simmer for 1 to 2 minutes, until the monk fruit is dissolved. Add the salmon, cover, and cook for 10 to 12 minutes, until the fish is tender. Transfer the fish to a bowl and cover to keep warm.

Add the bok choy and green onions to the pot and cook uncovered until the greens are wilted, about 10 to 15 minutes. Fold in the cilantro and Thai basil and spoon the broth and greens over the fish. Serve with coconut aminos to add to individual bowls.

Japanese-Style Beef, Sweet Potato, Miso, and Mushroom Stew

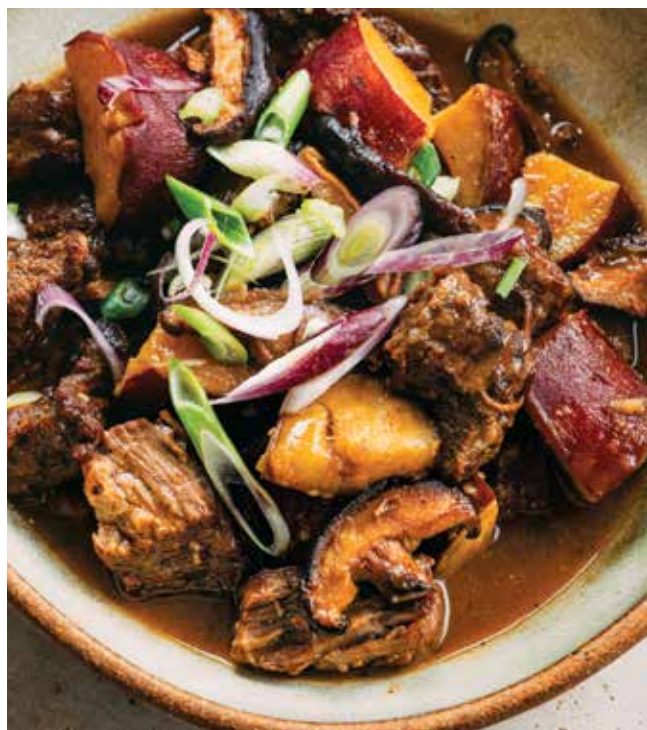
This rich, savory stew takes inspiration from Japanese nimono, or simmered dishes. I highly recommend using dashi if you can find it—it's available in most well-stocked grocery stores, near the soy sauce. If you can find Japanese sweet potatoes, definitely use them—they're a bit sweeter and creamier than the sweet potatoes most of us grew up with, and the sweetness is really lovely with the beef. That said, it's delicious with the sweet potatoes typically found in the grocery store, too.

Serves 3 to 4

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| 2 tablespoons sesame oil | 1/4 cup coconut aminos or tamari |
| 1 1/2 pounds beef chuck, cut into bite-sized cubes | 3 tablespoons monk fruit sweetener |
| 2 tablespoons red or white miso paste | 2 cups diced sweet potatoes (cut the sweetener in half if using Japanese sweet potatoes) |
| 2 cups sliced mushrooms (shiitake or porcini are best) | Juice of 1 lemon |
| 2 cups dashi (Japanese fish stock) or chicken bone broth | 1/4 cup sliced green onion |
| 1 large ginger root, about 6 inches, sliced into rounds (about 1/2 cup rounds) | |

Heat the oil in a large heavy-bottomed soup pot over medium-high heat. Add the beef and sear on all sides, about 10 minutes. Add the miso and mushrooms and continue to cook until the mushrooms begin to soften, about 5 minutes. Add the dashi, ginger, coconut aminos, and monk fruit to the pot. Bring to a simmer, adjust the heat to low, cover, and simmer for 1 1/2 hours, or until the meat is nearly tender (start checking at 10-minute intervals).

Add the sweet potatoes and cook, uncovered, until the stew is thickened and the sweet potatoes are tender, about 20 minutes. Remove from the heat, stir in the lemon juice, and serve garnished with the green onions.





Lamb Tagine with Apricots, Sweet Potatoes, and Artichokes

I went to college in Miami—a cultural melting pot—and some of my best friends there were Middle Eastern. One of my Moroccan friends turned me on to the magic that is the tagine. This extremely savory dish is a really perfect one-pot meal for a cold night. It's a hearty stew with a balance of flavors in every bite—sweet, salty, fresh, and savory—to keep your taste buds excited from start to finish.

Serves 4

2 tablespoons avocado oil
1 large yellow onion, finely diced
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 tablespoon ras-el-hanout*
1 teaspoon ground coriander
1 teaspoon salt, or to taste
1 pound boneless lamb leg meat, cut into 1-inch cubes
2 cups peeled, diced sweet potatoes
1 cup dried apricots, diced
1 (14-ounce) can quartered artichoke hearts, drained and rinsed

1 (15-ounce) can diced tomatoes with juices
2 cups beef bone broth
Zest of 1 lemon
Zest of 1 orange
¼ cup toasted pine nuts
Plain unsweetened coconut yogurt

* Available in most well-stocked spice sections. If unavailable, sub in a mixture of equal parts ground coriander, paprika, and ginger.

Preheat the oven to 375°F.

Heat the oil in a large Dutch oven (or an oven-safe, stovetop-safe tagine, if you have one) over medium-high heat. Add the onion and cook for 3 to 5 minutes, until translucent and tender. Add the garlic, ras-el-hanout, coriander, and salt and stir to combine. Add the lamb and cook until the lamb is browned on the outside and the garlic is fragrant, another 3 to 5 minutes.

Add the sweet potatoes, apricots, artichoke hearts, tomatoes, and bone broth to the pot and bring to a boil. Turn off the heat, cover, transfer to the oven, and cook for 1 hour, or until the lamb is tender. Remove the cover, stir, and cook uncovered for an additional 30 minutes.

Fold in the lemon zest, orange zest, and pine nuts, then taste and adjust the seasoning as needed. Serve with coconut yogurt for creaminess and tang.

Better Brain Bowl

This is a super-simple recipe (if you can even call it that) that provides incredible brain nourishment in the form of monounsaturated fat, lutein, zeaxanthin, omega-3s, and fiber. If you really want to throw caution to the wind and kick things up a notch, add a dollop of chipotle lime avocado oil-based mayo (it can be found at most major super-markets) after the last step!

Serves 1

1 (4.4-ounce) can sardines (I love Wild Planet Wild Sardines in Extra-Virgin Olive Oil with Lemon)	1 avocado
	1 lemon wedge

Drain the oil or water from the can and then empty the sardines into a bowl. Slice up the avocado, add it to the bowl, squeeze the lemon on top, and serve.



Fennel Braised Salmon

In another life, I must have been Greek. These classic Mediterranean flavors are some of my favorites, and you'll see them pop up a few times in this book. If fennel isn't your thing, consider using celery, leek, or even baby bok choy—and adjust the cooking time accordingly.

Serves 4

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
1 large red onion, thinly sliced
1 bulb fennel, cored and thinly sliced
½ teaspoon salt, or to taste
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
Zest of 1 orange
1 lemon, sliced

½ cup green olives, pitted and roughly chopped
1½ pound skinless salmon fillets, cut into 4 equal pieces
2 cups vegetable broth
1 pinch saffron (optional, and delicious)

Heat the oil in a large high-sided skillet with a tight-fitting lid over medium-high heat. Add the onion, fennel, salt, black pepper, and orange zest and cook, stirring frequently, until the fennel begins to wilt, 5 to 7 minutes. Add the lemon and olives and toss to combine. Add the salmon, vegetable broth, and saffron, if using. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and cook for 10 minutes. Remove the cover and cook for an additional 5 minutes, or until the salmon is tender and flakes easily with a fork. Serve.



Olive Oil–Poached Salmon

This flavorful poached salmon is great on its own, as a topping for salad, or even mixed into a vegetable stir-fry. It's a great recipe for beginners, in that it yields a perfectly tender fish every time—nothing dried out or overly fishy. I recommend using a kitchen thermometer to get the temperature just right, but I have provided instructions just in case you don't have one!

Serves 4 to 6

1 quart extra-virgin olive oil
Zest of 1 lemon, removed in large strips
2 sprigs rosemary
4 cloves garlic, smashed

1 small bunch thyme
1 bay leaf
1 teaspoon salt, or to taste
4 (6-ounce) skinless salmon fillets



Find a pot that will fit all 4 salmon fillets in a single layer and add enough oil to submerge the salmon (leave the salmon out of the pot for now). Add the lemon zest, rosemary, garlic, thyme, bay leaf, and salt to the oil. Heat over low heat until the oil reaches 125°F (the oil should be warm but not simmering/bubbling at all). Gently transfer the salmon to the oil and cook for 20 minutes. Remove the salmon from the oil and serve.

Note: You can strain and keep the oil in the refrigerator to poach another batch of salmon down the road. It will have a slightly fishy taste, but it will also be delicious for stir-fries or sautés, or in salad dressing.

Za'atar Salmon Burgers

This “burger” recipe takes on a tangy, Middle Eastern twist thanks to sumac-heavy za’atar and plenty of citrus zest. I like these patties with a green salad or wrapped in a lettuce leaf as a breadless burger. If you want to really push them over the top (remember: you only live once!), try them with sliced avocado and grilled red onions.

Serves 4

1½ pounds skinless wild salmon fillets
1 shallot, minced
1 tablespoon minced fresh dill
3 tablespoons za’atar*
1 teaspoon salt*
Zest of 1 lemon
Zest of 1 orange
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard

2 tablespoons coconut flour
2 tablespoons almond flour
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

*Za’atar is a Middle Eastern spice blend that contains sesame seeds, sumac, and other spices. It sometimes also contains salt. If your za’atar contains salt, omit the salt from this recipe.

Cut the salmon into small chunks, then pulse them in a food processor until they are the consistency of ground beef (you can also hand chop the salmon if you’d prefer).

Transfer the salmon to a bowl and fold in the shallot, dill, za’atar, salt, lemon zest, orange zest, mustard, coconut flour, and almond flour until well combined.

Let the mixture rest for 10 minutes so the flour can hydrate, then form into four equal-sized patties. If the mixture doesn’t hold together, add additional coconut flour 1 tablespoon at a time and rest briefly before shaping.

In a large skillet, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the patties to the skillet and cook for about 6 minutes per side, until golden brown on the outside and 125°F on the inside.

Serve wrapped in lettuce, on top of a salad, or however you prefer your burgers.



Coconut Curried Eggs

Who says you can't eat eggs for dinner? Not this guy. Whenever I see an egg curry at an Indian restaurant, I order it without thinking twice—because it's such a hearty, savory dish. While many egg curries feature hard-boiled eggs, I drew inspiration from shakshuka to delicately poach eggs in the curry sauce, imparting maximum flavor with each bite.

Serves 4 to 6

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil	1 teaspoon ground ginger
1 medium yellow onion, minced	1 teaspoon salt, or to taste
1 medium green bell pepper, minced	1 tablespoon monk fruit sweetener
2 cups broccoli slaw	1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes
2 cloves garlic, minced	1 (14-ounce) can full-fat unsweetened coconut milk
3 tablespoons mild curry powder	6 eggs
1 teaspoon paprika (hot or sweet, your choice)	¼ cup minced fresh basil
2 teaspoons ground turmeric	Hot sauce
1 teaspoon ground cumin	

Heat the oil in a very large skillet with a tight-fitting lid over medium heat.

Add the onion, bell pepper, and broccoli slaw and cook for 4 to 5 minutes, until the vegetables are tender. Add the garlic, curry powder, paprika, turmeric, cumin, ginger, salt, and monk fruit and cook until the garlic is fragrant and the spices are lightly toasted, about 2 minutes. Add the tomatoes and coconut milk, bring to a simmer, and simmer for 7 to 10 minutes, until the sauce begins to thicken.

Gently crack the eggs into the pan, reduce the heat to low, cover, and cook until the eggs are set but not tough, 5 to 7 minutes. Sprinkle with the basil and serve with hot sauce.





Brisket Chili, Mole Style

A dish that combines grass-fed beef and dark chocolate? If heaven exists, believe you me, this is being served at the buffet. This beef-based chili draws from classic Tex-Mex flavors as well as the traditional flavors of Mexican mole, made with chiles and chocolate, for a rich, savory flavor that's perfect on a cool winter evening, at a tailgate, or whenever you need a bowl of something warm and cozy.

Serves 6

3 dried ancho chiles	1 tablespoon dried oregano
3 dried guajillo chiles	1½ teaspoons salt, or to taste
¼ cup dried mushrooms	1 (28-ounce) can fire-roasted tomatoes
1 cup boiling water	2 cups beef or chicken bone broth
¼ cup avocado oil	¼ cup minced sugar-free bittersweet chocolate (preferably Mexican chocolate)
2 medium yellow onions, minced	Plain unsweetened coconut yogurt
2 pounds beef brisket, diced	¼ cup minced fresh cilantro leaves
1 head garlic, cloves diced	Sliced jalapeños
¼ cup minced fresh cilantro stems	Pickled onions
2 tablespoons chili powder	
1 tablespoon ground cumin	

Remove the stems and seeds from the chiles, then break into small pieces into a small bowl. Add the dried mushrooms and boiling water and let steep for 10 minutes. Transfer to a blender and blend until smooth. Set aside.

Heat the oil in a large, heavy-bottomed soup pot over medium high heat. Add the onions and brisket and cook until the brisket is browned and the onions are tender, 7 to 10 minutes. Add the garlic and cilantro stems and cook until the garlic is fragrant, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the chili powder, cumin, oregano, and salt and cook for an additional minute. Add the dried chile puree, fire-roasted tomatoes, and bone broth to the mixture, bring to a simmer, then reduce the heat to low and simmer for 1½ to 2 hours, until the beef is fall-apart tender and the chili is nice and thick.

Remove from the heat, add the chocolate, and stir to melt it in. Taste and add salt as needed; if it's too spicy, add more bone broth or coconut yogurt to tone down the heat.

Serve with the cilantro leaves, coconut yogurt, jalapeños, and pickled onions.

Shawarma-Spiced Kebabs

Growing up in New York City, I had access to the best shawarma this side of the Nile. My take on it is that it's a great way to use up the last of the fresh herbs in your fridge—but it's so much more. The mix of dry and fresh herbs and spices really adds a punch of flavor to the meat—and kebabs are great cooked on the stovetop, or even on your grill. I suggest whipping up a quick coconut yogurt sauce for dipping if you've got the time—just combine plain coconut yogurt (or dairy Greek yogurt if your heart desires), herbs, salt, pepper, and lemon juice.

Serves 4

2 tablespoons ground black pepper	1½ teaspoons salt
2 tablespoons ground allspice	1½ pounds ground lamb*
2 tablespoons garlic powder	1 shallot, finely minced
1 tablespoon ground turmeric	2 tablespoons finely minced fresh mint
1 tablespoon ground cinnamon	2 tablespoons finely minced fresh dill
1 tablespoon ground nutmeg	1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
1½ teaspoons ground cloves	
1½ teaspoons ground cardamom	
1½ teaspoons dried oregano	

*You could sub beef if you like.

In a small bowl, whisk together the black pepper, allspice, garlic, turmeric, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, cardamom, oregano, and salt.

Place the lamb in a large bowl and toss with 3 tablespoons of the spice mixture (save the remaining spice mixture for another time), then toss with the shallot, mint, and dill. Using clean hands, gently work the lamb mixture until well combined.

Shape into patties (if cooking on stovetop, makes 8 to 10) or around skewers (if grilling, makes 6 to 8). Brush the meat with the oil. Heat a grill to medium heat, sear the meat for 2 to 3 minutes per side. To cook on the stovetop, heat a large skillet to medium-high heat. Add oil, then cook patties 3 to 5 minutes per side, until crisp and brown on the outside and about 130 degrees in the middle. Serve.





Sheet Pan Balsamic Chicken and Broccoli with Red Onions and Figs

Balsamic vinegar and figs are a perfect combination of sweetness and tang—and they pair beautifully with broccoli. I love that this is a single pan meal that’s quick, easy, and perfect for a worknight. If you’re not a huge fan of chicken or want to change it up, you can make this with salmon or shrimp.

Serves 4

1½ pounds boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1½-inch strips	2 cups peeled and finely diced sweet potato
1 teaspoon salt, divided	1 cup chopped dried figs
⅓ cup balsamic vinegar, divided	¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard	2 tablespoons fresh rosemary, minced
1 large red onion, roughly chopped	2 cloves garlic, minced
4 cups broccoli florets, cut into bite-sized pieces (1 large head)	½ teaspoon ground black pepper
	½ teaspoon dried oregano

Place the chicken in a large bowl and season with ½ teaspoon of the salt. In a small bowl, whisk together half of the vinegar and the mustard and toss with the chicken to coat. Leave the chicken to marinate for 30 minutes to 1 hour.

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Line a large sheet pan with parchment paper.

In a large bowl, toss together the onion, broccoli, sweet potato, and figs. Whisk together the remaining vinegar, remaining ½ teaspoon salt, the oil, rosemary, garlic, black pepper, and oregano and toss with the vegetable mixture.

Transfer the veggies to the prepared sheet pan and bake for 10 to 15 minutes, until just beginning to brown around the edges. Toss the veggies, add the chicken to the pan, and cook for an additional 15 to 20 minutes, until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the chicken reads 165°F and the veggies are cooked to your liking. Let sit for 3 to 5 minutes, then serve.

Roasted Leg of Lamb with Garlic, Sweet Potatoes, and Broccoli

There's nothing I love more than a single-pan (in this case, a roasting pan) dinner for easy cleanup and convenience. And this classic roast lamb is the perfect party dish for anyone who wants to host and still enjoy plenty of time with their guests. The garlicky lamb is offset by the sweetness of citrus zest and pairs perfectly with sweet potatoes and nutty roasted broccoli.

Serves 8 to 10

8 cloves garlic, divided	1½ teaspoons salt, divided
2 tablespoons fresh rosemary leaves	1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
2 tablespoons fresh thyme leaves	1 (5- to 6-pound) bone-in leg of lamb
Zest of 1 lemon	6 cups broccoli bite-sized florets (1½ large heads)
Zest of 1 orange	3 cups peeled and cubed sweet potatoes
1 teaspoon ground coriander	
1 teaspoon ground black pepper	

Preheat the oven to 325°F. Line a roasting pan with foil (for easier cleanup).

In a food processor, pulse together 4 of the garlic cloves, the rosemary, thyme, lemon and orange zests, coriander, black pepper, 1 teaspoon of the salt, and the mustard to form a smooth paste.

Place the lamb fat-side up in the prepared roasting pan. Using a sharp knife, score the fat by making shallow cuts all over. Rub the garlic paste onto the fatty side of the lamb, coating as much of the exposed surface as possible.

Transfer to the oven and roast until the lamb reaches desired temperature (about 135°F for medium, 120 to 125°F for medium-rare). This will take 1½ to 2 hours, depending on the size of your roast.

Meanwhile, thinly slice the remaining garlic.

Take the lamb from the oven, remove from the pan, tent with foil, and let it rest. Turn the oven temperature up to 400°F.

Immediately put the broccoli, sliced garlic, and sweet potatoes in the roasting pan and toss with the lamb fat in the bottom of the pan. Roast for 15 to 20 minutes, until tender in the middle and crisp on the edges. Serve with the well-rested lamb.





Cocoa-Rubbed Beef Loin with Blueberry-Red Wine Sauce

Time to hire a sitter; this dish, bringing together cocoa, beef, and blueberries, is like a *ménage à trois* in your mouth. Throw some wine into the mix, and you've got yourself a party! As you might imagine, this dish is rich and indulgent, so it's great to serve at an intimate dinner gathering or for a date night. I've also made the sauce with a mixture of raspberries and blackberries—and it was delicious that way, too, so feel free to work with what you've got on hand.

Serves 4

¼ cup unsweetened cocoa powder	4 tablespoons avocado oil, divided
1 tablespoon salt, or to taste	2 shallots, minced
1 teaspoon paprika	Zest of 1 orange
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper	2 cups blueberries, minced
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon	2 tablespoons fresh thyme leaves
½ teaspoon garlic powder	2 cups dry red wine
1 (1½-pound) beef tenderloin	

Preheat the oven to 425°F.

In a small bowl, whisk together the cocoa powder, salt, paprika, cayenne, cinnamon, and garlic powder. Place the tenderloin in a large bowl and toss in the cocoa mixture to coat.

Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a very large, oven-safe skillet over medium heat. Sear the tenderloin on all sides, then transfer to the oven. Roast for 30 to 40 minutes, until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the center reads 125°F for rare or up to 150°F for well-done.

Meanwhile, make the sauce: Heat the remaining 2 tablespoons oil in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the shallots and orange zest and cook until the shallots are tender, then add the blueberries and thyme and cook until the blueberries start to pop. Add the red wine, bring to a simmer, then reduce the heat to maintain a simmer and cook for 20 to 35 minutes, until the liquid has reduced by half and the bulk of the alcohol has cooked off.

When the tenderloin has reached your desired level of doneness, remove from oven, place on a carving board, and let rest 10 minutes. Taste the sauce and add more salt if needed. Slice the meat and serve with the sauce.

Simply Grilled Steak with Charred Kale Salad

Some days, you just need a steak. And whether you're grilling on a big gas grill or a little balcony-sized hibachi, there's no reason to get an extra pan dirty—you can cook your side dish right on the grill, too. I find the char adds a bit of sweetness to the salad, making it a perfect accompaniment to the rich steak.

Serves 2

2 (6-ounce) New York strip steaks	1 avocado, thinly sliced
1 teaspoon salt	¼ cup toasted hazelnuts
2 large bunches lacinato kale	¼ cup nutritional yeast
4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided	¼ cup balsamic vinegar
1 large red onion, thinly sliced	1 clove garlic, crushed and minced

Heat half your grill to high heat (if gas) or build a two-zone fire (if charcoal).

Season the steaks with the salt and let come to room temperature while the grill is heating up.

In a large bowl, toss the kale with 2 tablespoons of the oil.

Grill the steaks: for medium-rare, cook for 4 to 5 minutes per side over high heat. For anything more done, transfer to the cooler part of the grill and cook until you've reached your desired temperature—130 to 135°F for medium-rare, 135 to 140°F for medium-well, 150°F for well-done (keep in mind that the steaks will continue to cook a little after you remove them from the grill).

Remove the steaks from the grill and let rest.

Meanwhile, grill the kale over the hottest part of the grill for 30 seconds to 1 minute, just to get a char on the edges. Remove the kale from the grill and, remove leaves from stems (discarding stems), and chop them into bite-sized pieces. Return to the bowl and toss with the remaining 2 tablespoons oil, the onion, avocado, hazelnuts, nutritional yeast, vinegar, and garlic. Serve the steak with the kale salad.





Mushroom Broth with Greens and Ramen-Style Eggs

I'm always game for a hearty and substantial protein-rich soup as a meal, and this recipe does the trick. This ramen-inspired broth is made with mushrooms rather than a pork base, and includes sliced greens for “noodles”—and like any good bowl of ramen, those creamy, rich, perfectly cooked eggs turn dinner from delicious to luxurious.

Serves 4

1 cup dried shiitake mushrooms, crumbled	2 cups fresh mushrooms, diced (assorted types is best)
6 cups water, chicken bone broth, or dashi	4 tablespoons coconut aminos or tamari, divided
2 tablespoons sesame oil	2 cups sliced hearty greens (cabbage, kale, chard, collard, or mustard greens)
3 cloves garlic, minced	4 eggs
2 tablespoons grated fresh ginger	

Steep the dried mushrooms in the hot water or broth for 20 minutes, while simmering over low heat.

Meanwhile, in a large, heavy-bottomed soup pot, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Add the garlic, ginger, and fresh mushrooms and cook until the mushrooms are browned and tender, 3 to 6 minutes.

Strain the mushroom broth, pressing on the solids to release all the flavorful liquid.

Add 4 cups of the mushroom broth to the pot, bring to a simmer, then reduce the heat and simmer for 15 minutes.

Pour the remaining 2 cups broth into a separate small pot, add 2 tablespoons of the coconut aminos, and bring to a boil.

While broth is coming to a boil, add the greens and the remaining 2 tablespoons coconut aminos to the large soup mixture and reduce the heat to low. Cover and simmer for 5 to 10 minutes, until the greens are wilted.

When the broth in the small pot is boiling, carefully add the (uncracked) eggs to the pot and cook uncovered for 6 to 7 minutes. Remove from the broth, run under cold water, and peel the eggs.

Slice each egg in half and serve cut-side up in individual serving bowls of broth and greens.

Salmon and Shrimp Stew with Pumpkin and Coconut

This one is inspired by a traditional Thai red curry with pumpkin (or squash) served at some of the amazing Thai restaurants where I live in LA. This hearty recipe is a great stand-alone dinner—and the leftovers make fantastic lunch. Thai red curry paste is available near the soy sauce in most well-stocked grocery stores, and there are a lot of fantastic recipes using it online. It's a little spicy, so if heat isn't your thing, consider adding extra coconut milk or even a spoonful of almond butter or tahini to tone down the heat.

Serves 4

2 tablespoons coconut oil	2 cups vegetable or chicken bone broth
1 small red onion, diced	2 cups peeled and deveined large shrimp
4 cups thinly sliced peeled fresh pumpkin or butternut squash	1 cup chopped (bite-sized chunks) skinless salmon
3 cloves garlic, minced	2 cups shredded kale leaves
1 heaping tablespoon finely grated fresh ginger	1 cup frozen peas
3 tablespoons Thai red curry paste	Juice of 1 lime
1 cup pumpkin puree (unsweetened canned pumpkin is perfect)	¼ cup minced fresh cilantro
1 (15-ounce) can full-fat unsweetened coconut milk	¼ cup minced fresh basil
	¼ cup minced fresh mint
	1 jalapeño, finely diced (optional; there's already spice from the curry paste)

In a large soup pot, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Add the onion and pumpkin and cook, stirring frequently, until the onion is translucent, 3 to 5 minutes. Add the garlic, ginger, and curry paste and cook for an additional 3 to 4 minutes, until the garlic and ginger are fragrant. Add the pumpkin puree, coconut milk, and broth to the pot and stir well to combine. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer until the pumpkin is tender, about 15 minutes.

Add the shrimp and salmon and continue to simmer for 5 to 7 minutes, until the shrimp is cooked through and the salmon is slightly flaky. Add the kale and peas and cook uncovered for an additional 3 to 5 minutes, until the greens are wilted.

Remove from the heat and add the lime juice, cilantro, basil, mint, and jalapeño, if using, and serve.





Seared Scallops with Fennel Herb Salad and Creamy Almond Sauce

I've always enjoyed scallops, I but rarely order them in restaurants because they're so expensive and you get so few. This dish is perfect if you've got access to nice, big wild-caught scallops. And while I prefer fresh, you can use frozen scallops—just make sure to thaw them thoroughly before starting the dish to get that nice crisp sear. The creamy, tangy romesco-inspired sauce is also great as a dipping sauce for raw veggies—or even thinned out as a salad dressing.

Serves 4

1 cup jarred roasted red bell peppers, drained and patted dry	1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
3/4 cup lightly toasted almonds	2 bulbs fennel, cored and thinly sliced
1 clove garlic, peeled	1 large red onion, minced
1 shallot, peeled	1/4 cup minced fresh dill
1 tablespoon red wine vinegar	1/4 cup minced fresh parsley
1 teaspoon smoked paprika	1/4 cup minced fresh chives
Zest and juice of 1 lemon	1 pound sea scallops
1 1/2 teaspoons salt, divided	1/4 cup avocado oil

In a high-speed blender or a food processor fitted with an “S” blade, combine the roasted peppers, almonds, garlic, and shallot and pulse until well combined and chunky. Add the vinegar, paprika, lemon zest, and 3/4 teaspoon of the salt. With the machine running, stream in the olive oil through the hole in the lid until a creamy sauce has formed.

In a large bowl, toss together the fennel, onion, dill, parsley, and chives. Season with the lemon juice and a pinch of the remaining salt. Set aside.

Using a paper towel, pat the scallops completely dry on all sides and season with the remaining salt.

Heat a well-seasoned cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat. Add the avocado oil, then the scallops, and cook for 2 minutes, making sure not to move them at all.* Flip and cook for an additional minute. Serve the scallops with the fennel salad and a large dollop of the sauce.

*You may need to work in batches so you don't overcrowd the pan.

Braised Beef and Sweet Potatoes with Cauliflower “Polenta”

Spend any significant time in the Northeast and you know the misery of drudging through cold and rainy weather, desperate to get home after a long day. I’ve been there, and it was times like those I really appreciated my mother or grandmother making me a good stew. Served over a creamy cauliflower polenta, this take is richly savory, thanks to the addition of miso paste to what would otherwise be a classic Italian recipe.

Serves 4

1 pound beef chuck, cut into bite-sized pieces	1 teaspoon ground black pepper, or to taste
½ teaspoon salt, or to taste	1 teaspoon paprika
1 tablespoon tapioca starch	1 tablespoon minced fresh rosemary
4 tablespoons avocado oil, divided	3 cups beef bone broth
1 large yellow onion, thinly sliced	2 cups sweet potatoes, peeled and diced
3 ribs celery, diced	1 medium head cauliflower, chopped into bite-sized pieces
3 medium carrots, diced	¼ cup unsweetened coconut cream
3 cloves garlic, minced	¼ cup nutritional yeast
1 tablespoon red miso paste	

Place the beef in a large bowl, season with the salt, and toss in the tapioca starch.

In a large Dutch oven, heat 2 tablespoons of the oil over high heat. Add the beef and sear until browned on all sides, about 4 minutes per side.

Remove the beef from the pot to a bowl, reduce heat to medium, add the onion, celery, and carrots to the pan, and cook until the onions are translucent and tender, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic, miso paste, black pepper, paprika, and rosemary and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until very fragrant and well combined. Add the beef broth, bring to a simmer, then reduce the heat to low, cover, and cook until the meat is very tender, about 2 hours. Uncover, add sweet potatoes, and continue to cook, stirring occasionally, for about 30 minutes for the sauce to reduce and thicken.

While the beef has about an hour left to cook, preheat the oven to 400°F.

In a large bowl, toss the cauliflower with the remaining 2 tablespoons oil and spread onto a large sheet pan. Roast the cauliflower until dark golden brown and tender, tossing occasionally, about 40 minutes. Remove the cauliflower from the oven and transfer to a food processor. Add the coconut cream and nutritional yeast and pulse until creamy. Taste and add more salt and pepper if needed.

Place the cauliflower in serving bowls, top with the beef, and serve.



CHAPTER 6

ACCOUTREMENTS

This chapter contains a few sauces that were too good to leave out. I'm a huge fan of sauces, but most commercial preparations (including restaurant offerings) are loaded with sugar and/or unhealthy oils. I've included serving suggestions as well.

Whipped Black Garlic and Olive Oil Dipping Sauce

This sauce is inspired by the addictive garlic sauce (toum) at some of my favorite local Middle Eastern spots, but made using only super healthy oils. If you like a sharper sauce, you can use the traditional raw garlic, but the slightly sweet flavor of fermented garlic is really nice, especially with heartier meats like lamb or beef. Make sure to look for a buttery, mild-flavored extra-virgin olive oil to round out the flavor.

Makes 1 cup, serves 8

1/4 cup avocado oil

1 shallot, thinly sliced

1 teaspoon salt

2 bulbs black garlic, peeled

1/3 cup mild-flavored extra-virgin olive oil

1/3 cup lemon juice

In a small saucepan, heat the avocado oil over low heat. Add the shallot and cook 3 to 4 minutes, until tender. Set aside to cool. Transfer the shallot with the oil to a food processor fitted with an “S” blade and add the salt and black garlic.

With the machine running, stream in 1 tablespoon of the olive oil, then 1 tablespoon lemon juice, scraping down the sides as needed. When the oil and lemon juice incorporate and emulsify, add another round until you’ve used it all, continuing to scrape the sides as needed. This process will take up to 15 minutes and the result will be a light, fluffy sauce that’s delicious as a dip for raw veggies or roasted chicken or beef.

Store in the fridge, covered and wrapped well (the strong flavor of black garlic likes to spread).



Savory Blueberry Balsamic Sauce

As I've mentioned before, I love balsamic vinegar, and I relish any opportunity to use it in recipes. This sauce is deceptively simple to make, but it's nonetheless incredibly rich, complicated, tangy, sweet, and super-savory. It goes perfectly with grass-fed beef or pork or a strong-flavored fish like salmon. You can also use it for a dipping sauce or drizzle it on roasted veggies.

Makes about 1 cup

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil	¼ teaspoon salt
2 shallots, minced	1 heaping cup fresh or frozen blueberries
1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves	¾ cup balsamic vinegar
1 teaspoon ground black pepper	

Heat the oil in a small saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the shallots, thyme, black pepper, and salt and cook for 3 to 5 minutes, stirring frequently, until shallots are tender. Add the blueberries and cook until the blueberries burst. Add the vinegar, reduce the heat to low, and cook for 10 to 15 minutes, thoroughly crushing the berries with a fork or whisk until berries have released their juices and a sauce has formed.

Transfer to a blender and blend until smooth. Strain the sauce through a fine-mesh strainer back into the pan. Place over low heat, bring to a simmer, and cook until the mixture is reduced to 1 cup. Store refrigerated in an airtight glass jar for up to 2 weeks.

Almond “Peanut” Butter

I like peanut butter as much as the next guy, but for a lot of people, peanuts are off the table. Whether you’re someone who is in the “no peanut” crew, or you’re just looking for a slightly healthier alternative . . . this almond butter delivers. It’s got a rich, peanutty taste despite the absence of peanuts and is great with jam, dark chocolate, or even out of the jar. Just know that once you’ve broken the seal, it may be hard to stop! Don’t say I didn’t warn you. Use anywhere you’d use peanut butter.

Makes about 2 cups

2½ cups raw almonds

½ cup raw macadamia nuts (optional, or
sub another ½ cup almonds)

1½ teaspoons coconut aminos

2 tablespoons nutritional yeast

½ teaspoon monk fruit sweetener

Heat a large skillet over medium-low heat. Add the almonds and macadamia nuts and toast, stirring constantly, until they smell fragrant and nutty, taking care not to let them burn, about 6 minutes. Transfer to a plate and let cool to room temperature.

Transfer the nuts to a food processor fitted with an “S” blade and pulse until gritty, then process the nuts until a paste is formed (this can take 5 minutes or more, depending on your machine). Make sure to scrape down the sides regularly.

When nut butter is *almost* to the consistency of your liking (smooth or chunky—your choice), add the coconut aminos, nutritional yeast, and monk fruit and process for 1 minute more, or until you’ve reached the perfect consistency.



CHAPTER 7

DESSERTS

Who says living a Genius Life can't include dessert? I certainly don't! In this chapter, you'll find sweet treats made without grain flours or sugar so you can enjoy indulging and feel great afterward. It's possible, and these recipes are proof!

Almond Olive Oil Cake

Olive oil cakes are traditional in Italian cuisine—though they’re often made with grain flour rather than almonds. This luscious, protein-rich cake highlights some flavors that are a bit unusual for a dessert—rosemary and black pepper—and which in fact go beautifully with the citrus, cranberry, and allspice. To push it over the top, try it with a scoop of Sugar-Free Olive Oil Ice Cream.

Serves 8 to 12

1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for the pan	1/2 teaspoon baking powder
Zest of 1 orange, cut into large strips	3/4 teaspoon ground allspice
1 sprig rosemary	1 1/4 cups full-fat canned unsweetened coconut milk
1 teaspoon whole peppercorns	3 large eggs
1 3/4 cups almond flour (blanched is best)	1 teaspoon almond extract
1 tablespoon coconut flour	1/4 cup orange juice (from the zested orange, above)
1 1/4 cups monk fruit sweetener	1 cup fresh, frozen, or dried unsweetened cranberries
1 1/2 teaspoons salt	
1/2 teaspoon baking soda	

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spray a 9-inch round springform cake pan at least 2 inches high with oil and line it with parchment. Set aside.

In a small saucepan, combine the oil, orange zest, rosemary, and peppercorns and bring to a simmer over low heat. Simmer for 10 minutes, then remove from the heat and let cool.

In a large bowl, whisk together almond flour, coconut flour, monk fruit, salt, baking soda, baking powder, and allspice. In a separate bowl, whisk together coconut milk, eggs, almond extract, and orange juice.

Strain the cooled oil and add it to the egg mixture. Add the wet ingredients to the dry and whisk until just combined. Gently fold in the cranberries.

Pour into the prepared cake pan and bake for 45 minutes. Cover with foil and bake for an additional 20 to 30 minutes, until the cake is golden brown and a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.

Allow to cool on a wire rack in the pan for at least 30 minutes, then remove the cake by running a knife around the edges and carefully removing the ring of the pan. Slice and serve.



Avocado Chocolate Truffles

If you've got a sweet tooth, this one's for you. You'll really want to use a food processor for these so you have a perfectly smooth base for your truffles (chunks of unpureed avocado would be a buzzkill). You can try folding in some finely chopped toasted nuts or even coconut to tweak the flavor or up the texture of these rich, delicious, very dark chocolate truffles.

Makes 18 to 20

1 avocado (make sure it's very ripe)
1 cup bittersweet chocolate chips (at least 72 percent cacao), melted in double boiler
½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract
¼ teaspoon salt

Liquid stevia (3 to 6 drops are likely enough)*

¼ cup unsweetened cocoa powder

*I use unflavored stevia, but mint- or orange-flavored drops also complement the flavor of these truffles.



In a food processor fitted with an “S” blade, process the avocado until smooth, scraping down the sides a few times. Add the melted chocolate, vanilla, and salt and process until smooth, scraping the sides frequently. Taste and add stevia 1 to 2 drops at a time until the mixture is as sweet as you like. Transfer to a container and refrigerate for at least 1 hour to get it to a scoopable consistency.

Use a small spring-loaded ice cream scoop or a tablespoon to separate the mixture into truffle-sized lumps. Working quickly, roll each lump into a smooth ball with your hands (this can get messy—wear disposable gloves if desired). Spread the cocoa powder out on a plate and toss the truffles in the cocoa powder.

Serve at room temperature or slightly chilled. Store leftovers in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

Actually Healthy Hot Chocolate

On a winter day, there's nothing like a warm, comforting cup of hot chocolate—and this, in my opinion, is the ultimate recipe. Not only is it just about the richest hot cocoa recipe out there, but it reminds me of one of those chocolate oranges Hannukah Harry would bring me as a kid. (Fun fact: Hannukah Harry actually traces back to a 1989 sketch on *Saturday Night Live*. My family appreciated finally having a gift-giving patron saint for our own holiday, even if he was really just Jon Lovitz in costume.) This hot chocolate includes MCT oil, a fraction of coconut oil, which has been shown to support brain energy needs—how cool is that?

Serves 2

2 cups canned unsweetened coconut milk
1 cup water
¼ cup bittersweet chocolate chips (at least
72 percent cacao)
1 teaspoon cocoa powder
Zest of 1 orange

1 teaspoon monk fruit sweetener, plus more
as needed
¼ teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
2 tablespoons MCT oil

Combine the coconut milk and water in a large saucepan over medium heat and bring to a simmer. Reduce the heat to very low, add the chocolate chips, cocoa powder, orange zest, monk fruit, and salt, and cook, stirring constantly, until the chocolate chips are melted and the monk fruit is dissolved.

Remove from the heat, stir in the vanilla and MCT oil, and serve immediately.



Sugar-Free Olive Oil Ice Cream

This simple dairy-free ice cream recipe is inspired by the incredible olive oil ice cream at Gelateria Uli in Los Angeles, with the addition of rosemary, because rosemary and olive oil pair absolutely beautifully in desserts (you'll also find them in the olive oil cake. Make sure to use unsweetened coconut cream for this dessert (often found among Asian ingredients in the grocery store) rather than sugar-heavy cream of coconut.

Makes just under 1 quart

2 (14-ounce) cans unsweetened coconut cream 1 tablespoon vodka (optional)*

1 sprig rosemary

1/2 cup monk fruit sweetener

1 scant pinch salt

1 vanilla bean pod

6 egg yolks

1/2 cup very-high-quality extra-virgin
olive oil

*The vodka helps the ice cream stay scoopable when freezing and won't impact the flavor of the final product. It's fine to make your ice cream without it, but you'll want to let the ice cream sit at room temperature for 10 to 15 minutes before serving or it will be impossible to scoop.

In a large saucepan, combine the coconut cream, rosemary, monk fruit, and salt and bring to a simmer over medium heat. Split the vanilla bean in half and scrape the contents into the coconut mixture, saving the bean for a different use (like making your own vanilla extract). Simmer, stirring occasionally, for 10 to 15 minutes, until the monk fruit is dissolved. Set aside to cool, then remove the rosemary from the coconut mixture and discard.

Place the egg yolks in the bowl of stand mixer and whisk until frothy. With the mixer running, carefully and slowly stream the warm coconut mixture into the eggs, taking care that the eggs don't curdle. Transfer back to the saucepan and cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until the mixture thickens enough to coat a wooden spoon, 3 to 4 minutes.

Strain through a fine-mesh strainer and whisk in the olive oil and vodka, if using. Transfer to the refrigerator and chill completely, at least 1 hour or as long as overnight. This is a great time to make sure your ice cream machine components are chilled, too.

Freeze according to your ice cream maker's instructions to the consistency of soft serve. If you have any remaining olive oil, drizzle a small amount over the top (op-

tional). Serve immediately, or transfer to an airtight container and freeze to a hard-scoop consistency.

Note: If you don't have an ice cream machine, pour the chilled ice cream base into a freezer-safe loaf pan. Remove from the freezer every 20 to 30 minutes and stir, making sure to thoroughly scrape all the edges. This is a long (2- to 3-hour) process and will result in a slightly grainier (but 100 percent delicious) ice cream than you'll get using an ice cream machine.



Chocolate Almond Smoothie

This smoothie is basically a milkshake—but, like, healthy. The frozen banana adds some much-needed sweetness to unsweetened cocoa powder, and the cloves really bring out the flavor of the chocolate and almonds. So, if you're someone who craves a milkshake—try this instead (with a grass-fed burger, if you want). You can add a serving of vanilla whey protein isolate or your protein powder of choice to up the protein—perfect for a post-workout shake.

Serves 1

1/2 frozen banana, broken into chunks	1/2 teaspoon almond extract
1 cup unsweetened plain almond milk, plus more as needed	2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
3 tablespoons unsweetened almond butter	1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
	Monk fruit sweetener, if needed

In a blender, combine the banana, 1/2 cup of the almond milk, and the almond butter and blend until creamy. Add the remaining 1/2 cup almond milk, the almond extract, cocoa powder, and cloves and blend until smooth. If needed, add more almond milk a tiny bit at a time until you've reached your desired consistency.

Taste, and if it's not sweet enough, blend in monk fruit sweetener 1/4 teaspoon at a time. Serve immediately.

Chocolate Coconut Balls

While a little higher on the carbohydrate spectrum, this sweet snack exploits the delicious properties of Medjool dates (I could seriously eat those like they're going out of style). Not only does it satisfy the sweet tooth perfectly, but it's rich in polyphenols, minerals, vitamins, and healthy fats, plus a small hit of protein from the almonds. They're great as a dessert, or for a peri- or post-workout pick-me-up, you can pop one of these "cookie balls" and feel good about it—as well as a bit indulgent.

Makes 12

1/2 cup raw almonds	3 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
1 1/2 cups finely shredded unsweetened coconut, divided	1 tablespoon ground flaxseeds
1 1/2 cups pitted Medjool dates (about 15)	3 tablespoons toasted sesame seeds
	1/4 teaspoon salt

In a food processor fitted with an "S" blade, combine the almonds and 1 cup of the coconut and process until a fine crumble is formed, scraping down the sides as needed. Add the dates, cocoa powder, and flaxseeds and continue to process until a smooth paste is formed. You'll need to continue to scrape down the sides frequently and be patient—this process will take a between 3 and 10 minutes, depending on how powerful your food processor is. Add the sesame seeds and salt and pulse until just combined but still a little crunchy. Transfer the mixture to a large bowl and pour the remaining 1/2 cup shredded coconut onto a plate.

With damp hands, roll the mixture into 12 equal-sized balls, then roll the balls in the shredded coconut. Store in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks and serve as a quick one- or two-bite snack.

Dairy-Free Blueberry Ice Cream

There's nothing like a big scoop of ice cream on a hot day . . . especially when the ice cream is sweet, tangy, and full of flavor. Thanks to the high (healthy) fat content in this dairy-free ice cream, you'll enjoy the same richness and creaminess as dairy ice cream, whether you eat it soft serve (right out of the ice cream machine) or let it firm up in the freezer until scoopable. The sweetness comes only from blueberries, so you'll feel charged up with phytonutrients—not crashing from sugar—afterward.

Serves 4 to 6

2 cups fresh or frozen blueberries

Zest of 1/2 orange

Zest and juice of 1 lemon

2/3 cup monk fruit sweetener

1/4 teaspoon ground allspice

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1 (14-ounce) can full-fat unsweetened coconut milk

1 (14-ounce) can unsweetened coconut cream

1/4 teaspoon salt

1 tablespoon vodka (optional)*

*The vodka helps keep the ice cream from freezing too solid. If you don't add it, leave the ice cream out at room temperature for 10 to 15 minutes before scooping.

In a saucepan with lid, combine the blueberries, orange zest, lemon zest and juice, monk fruit, allspice, and vanilla and heat over low heat until the blueberries begin to break down, stirring frequently to prevent burning. Remove from the heat and let the mixture cool, then transfer to a blender along with the coconut milk, coconut cream, salt, and vodka, if using. Blend for 2 to 3 minutes, until completely smooth and creamy—the mixture will separate at first and then come back together.

Transfer to a container, place in the refrigerator, and chill completely, at least 1 hour or as long as overnight. This is a great time to make sure your ice cream machine components are chilled. Freeze according to your ice cream maker's instructions to the consistency of soft serve.

Serve immediately, or transfer to an airtight container and freeze to a hard-scoop consistency.

Note: If you don't have an ice cream machine, pour the chilled ice cream base into a freezer-safe loaf pan. Remove from the freezer every 20 to 30 minutes and stir, making sure to thoroughly scrape all the edges. This is a long (2- to 3-hour) process and will result in a slightly grainier (but 100 percent delicious) ice cream than you'll get using an ice cream machine.



Chocolate Blueberry Clusters

If you think chocolate-covered strawberries are delicious, just wait until you try chocolate-covered blueberries! They're as tangy and delicious but easier to pop a cluster and enjoy. So quick, easy, and fun to put together and you can make the clusters as big or small as you want. You can add a hit of lion's mane mushroom powder for an additional brain boost.

Serves 6

1 cup bittersweet chocolate chips (at least 72 percent cacao)*
1 tablespoon coconut oil
1 tablespoon lion's mane extract (optional)
1 tablespoon monk fruit sweetener (optional)**
2 cups fresh blueberries (make sure they are completely dry)
¼ teaspoon fine salt

*You can use two broken-up 3-ounce chocolate bars if you don't have chocolate chips.

**If using a darker chocolate (85 percent or higher), I recommend adding an additional 1 tablespoon monk fruit before folding in the blueberries.

Line a sheet pan with parchment paper and make sure there's room to fit it level in your refrigerator.

Melt the chocolate with the oil over a double boiler, or in 10-second bursts in a pot over low heat, stirring as you go until completely smooth and creamy. Add the lion's mane extract, if using. Remove from the heat. If you used a higher cacao bar (85 percent or higher), stir in the monk fruit. Fold in the blueberries.

While the chocolate is still moldable, use a spoon to pile the blueberries in bite-sized clusters on the sheet pan, 3 to 5 berries per cluster. With a rubber spatula, scrape any remaining chocolate over the berry clusters, making sure they're evenly coated. Sprinkle with the salt and transfer to the refrigerator. Let chill for at least 20 minutes, until firmly set. Store extras in the refrigerator for up to a week until you're ready to eat them.

Chocolate Coconut Cookies with Dried Blueberry “Chips”

There’s a reason chocolate chip cookies are snack-time staple. They’re just so good! This version is gluten- and grain-free, with nutrient-dense ingredients so tasty you won’t know you’re actually eating something healthy. I love the tart touch the blueberries add, but if you’d prefer (and sometimes I do), you can leave them out—or replace them with unsweetened dried cranberries or chopped dried figs. Just make sure your fruit of choice doesn’t have any added sugar.

Makes 12 to 15

1/4 cup plus 3 tablespoons coconut oil
1/4 cup monk fruit sweetener
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
4 large egg yolks
1/4 cup almond flour
2 tablespoons arrowroot powder

1 tablespoon ground flaxseeds
1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
1 cup unsweetened coconut flakes
1 cup bittersweet chocolate chips (or
chopped chocolate)—at least 70 percent
cacao
3/4 cup dried unsweetened blueberries

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line a sheet pan with parchment paper or a silicone mat.

In a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment or a large bowl, beat together the oil, monk fruit, salt, cinnamon, and egg yolks until smooth and fluffy. Add the almond flour, arrowroot, flaxseeds, vanilla, and coconut flakes and beat until a cohesive dough is formed. Fold in the chocolate chips and blueberries.

Roll the cookie dough into a 2-inch diameter log, wrap in plastic, and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes (or as long as overnight). Slice the log into 1-inch-thick cookie shapes and press lightly to spread each out to a thickness of 1/2 inch to 3/4 inch. Bake for 15 minutes, or until the cookies are golden brown at the edges and hold together. Let cool completely on the sheet before serving. Store at room temperature in an airtight container for 3 to 5 days.



Chocolate Avocado Pudding Three Ways

When I was a kid it was always exciting to get a pudding cup in my school lunch. And you know what? I still think pudding is delicious, but it's hard to find a healthy alternative. Never fear; Max is here with a recipe so good and healthy, you'll soon be "puddin'" this creamy, avocado-based recipe among your favorites. You can eat this as is for a twist on a classic chocolate pudding, or try any of my three variations below to spice things up, take a tropical taste bud vacation, or enjoy a rich, indulgent, nutty dessert.

Serves 4

For the base:

2 avocados (make sure they're very ripe), flesh scooped out	1/4 teaspoon instant espresso powder
1/4 cup powdered Swerve sweetener, plus more as needed	2 tablespoons full-fat canned coconut milk, plus more as needed
1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder	1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
	1/8 teaspoon salt

FOR A BASIC PUDDING:

In a food processor fitted with an "S" blade, combine the avocados, Swerve, and cocoa powder and process until well combined. Add the espresso powder, 2 tablespoons of the coconut milk, the vanilla, and salt and process until smooth, scraping the sides of the machine a few times. Taste and add more Swerve if you like. Serve as is or proceed to one of the variations below.

Spiced Chocolate Pudding

1/4 cup unsweetened coconut cream	1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon	1/8 teaspoon ground cumin
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves	

In a small saucepan, combine all the ingredients, bring to a simmer over medium heat, and simmer for 5 minutes (this can be done up to 1 day in advance). Let cool completely. Add to the basic pudding still in the food processor and process until incorporated. Transfer to a container and chill a bit before serving or it will be slightly too runny.

Coconutty Chocolate Pudding

1/4 cup unsweetened shredded coconut

1/4 cup toasted unsweetened coconut chips

1/4 teaspoon coconut extract

Add the shredded coconut and coconut extract to the basic pudding still in the food processor and process until incorporated (it may still be a little chunky—that's fine). Scoop into individual serving glasses/bowls, top with the toasted coconut chips, and serve.

Toasted Nut Chocolate Pudding

1/4 teaspoon almond extract

2 tablespoons minced toasted pistachios

1/4 cup unsweetened coconut cream

2 tablespoons minced toasted walnuts

2 tablespoons minced toasted pecans

Add the almond extract to the food processor when making the basic pudding and process with the rest of the ingredients.

In a small saucepan, combine the coconut cream with half of the toasted nuts, bring to a simmer over low heat, and simmer for 10 to 15 minutes to infuse the coconut cream with the flavor of the nuts. Remove from the heat and cool completely.

Blend the nut mixture in with the basic pudding still in the food processor and process until incorporated. Scoop into individual serving glasses/bowls and serve topped with the remaining nuts.



No-Sugar Almond “Granola”

I consider granola more of a dessert than a meal, but there’s no doubt that it makes a tasty cereal or topping for coconut or Greek yogurt. The trouble with most super-market versions is that they’re loaded with sugar and unhealthy oils. If you can’t find the monk fruit “maple syrup” I’ve used, make a simple syrup by dissolving one part monk fruit in one part water. It won’t have quite the same maple flavor, but it still works.

Makes 3½ cups

Avocado oil spray, for the pan	½ teaspoon ground ginger
¾ cup unsweetened coconut flakes	⅛ teaspoon ground cloves
2 cups raw slivered almonds	¼ teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons ground flaxseeds	¼ cup Lakanto monk fruit maple-flavored syrup
¼ cup whole flaxseeds	1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
¼ cup toasted sesame seeds	1 egg white, whipped until frothy
¼ cup unsweetened dried blueberries	
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon	

Preheat the oven to 300°F. Line a sheet pan with parchment paper and grease it lightly with avocado oil.

In a large bowl, toss together the coconut flakes, almonds, ground and whole flaxseeds, sesame seeds, and blueberries.

In a small bowl, whisk together the cinnamon, ginger, cloves, and salt.

Add the maple-flavored syrup, vanilla, and egg white to the nut mixture and stir until well combined. Add the spice mixture and stir until well incorporated.

Spread the mixture onto the sheet pan and press to form a thin, even layer. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, until lightly browned. Let cool completely before breaking it into pieces. Store at room temperature.

Chocolate Almond Butter Cups

True story: Growing up, I once ate so many Reese's Peanut Butter Cups in one sitting that I made myself sick, and then for years afterward I thought I was allergic to the combination of peanut butter and chocolate. Thankfully, I was wrong—I just had caved in to the delicious and super-addictive powers of nut butter and chocolate. These almond butter cups are much better for you than commercially sold cups and have a slightly peanutty taste thanks to the umami-rich coconut aminos that go into the spiced almond butter mix.

Makes 24

1/2 cup smooth unsweetened almond butter	1 tablespoon ground flaxseeds
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon	2 cups bittersweet chocolate chips (or chopped bittersweet chocolate)
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves	1 1/2 tablespoons coconut oil
1 to 2 drops liquid stevia	Flaky sea salt, such as Maldon, to garnish
1/4 teaspoon coconut aminos	
1/4 teaspoon salt	

Line a 24-cup mini-muffin tin with paper liners.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the almond butter, cinnamon, cloves, stevia, coconut aminos, salt, and flaxseeds until well combined. Cover and chill in the refrigerator until thickened, 10 to 15 minutes.

Remove from the refrigerator and roll into a log slightly smaller in diameter than the cups in the muffin tin. Cut the log into 24 equal-sized pieces and return to the refrigerator.

Melt together the chocolate chips and oil over a double boiler, stirring until smooth.

Drop a scant teaspoon of melted chocolate into each of the prepared cups and shake or tap the pan to level the chocolate layer. Transfer to refrigerator to chill and set for 5 to 10 minutes.

Place the discs of filling on top of the chocolate and top with remaining chocolate, making sure each disk is thoroughly covered. Tap to eliminate air bubbles.

Sprinkle with salt and chill until set, about 30 minutes. Bring back to room temperature before serving.



Flourless Sugar-Free Blueberry Lemon Tart with Almond Crust

In my opinion, lemon bars are one of the most perfect desserts in the world: it's the ideal balance of tangy and sweet. But how can you make a perfect lemon dessert without the grain, sugar, or dairy? Actually, it's pretty easy and truly delicious, especially with the addition of blueberries to add a little "pop" to the tang of the lemon filling.

For the crust:

1 large egg	1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons arrowroot powder
2 tablespoons powdered Swerve sweetener	
3 tablespoons coconut oil, melted and cooled, plus more if needed	1 tablespoon coconut flour
	1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
1 1/2 cups almond flour	1/4 teaspoon salt

For the filling:

Zest of 1 lemon	1/3 cup powdered Swerve sweetener
Zest of 1 tangerine	1/3 cup unsweetened coconut cream
3/4 cup fresh lemon juice	1 1/2 cups fresh blueberries
4 large eggs	

To make the crust: Preheat the oven to 375°F.

In a large bowl, whisk together the egg, Swerve, and coconut oil until well combined.

In a separate bowl, combine the almond flour, arrowroot, coconut flour, cloves, and salt.

Add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients and stir until well incorporated and easy to handle. If the dough is too dry, add a bit more coconut oil; if it's too wet, add more almond flour.

With damp fingers, pat the crust into a 9-inch tart pan and put the pan on a sheet tray (for easy handling). Bake for 10 to 12 minutes, until golden brown at edges, then remove from the oven and reduce the oven temperature to 325°F while you cool the crust.

To make the filling: In a large bowl, whisk together the lemon and tangerine zests, the lemon juice, eggs, Swerve, and coconut cream until smooth (you can also use a blender).

Spread the blueberries over the baked tart in a single layer. Carefully pour the lemon filling around the blueberries, being careful not to overfill the tart (the filling should come just below the edges of the tart shell).

Return to the oven and bake for 25 to 35 minutes, until the filling is set but just a little jiggly in the center. Let cool completely before serving. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 3 to 5 days.



RESOURCES

Science continues to evolve, and our food landscape is always changing. Keep up with me on social media for additional recipes and to continue your journey of self-education. And listen to my podcast, with new episodes released weekly. I routinely interview experts covering topics such as brain health, hormone health, mental health, fat loss and fitness, and productivity, and offer exclusive discounts and even freebies from partner food brands that I trust.

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