



simple dinners} week of september 27

Celebrate the flavors of early autumn with simple, fresh meals. This week we're featuring spaghetti bolognese over spaghetti or spaghetti squash coupled with a fresh green salad and Italian herb vinegar. We're also featuring a simple one-dish meal of baked beans with kielbasa as well as baked halibut with buttered green beans and a green salad dressed with roasted tomato vinaigrette.

tips & tricks} getting the most from this series

recipes & to-do lists}

- recipes are located on pages 2 through 12.
- mark the day you plan to prepare the menu.
- take a look at the to-do list which will help ensure your meal comes together easily at dinner time.

shopping list}

- print out the shopping list (page 13), and take it with you to market.
- remember, save money by shopping from your pantry first. what do you already have in stock?

supplemental recipes}

- if you're a tried-and-true from-scratch cook, try our supplemental recipes for basic ingredients like chicken stock (page 14).

seasonal produce guide}

- check out the guide to seasonal produce and mark your notes on page 15.

need help}

- Email me! Use the subject "SIMPLE DINNERS."

week of september 27}

menu #1} spaghetti bolognese
spaghetti squash OR spaghetti
bolognese sauce
green salad with italian herb vinaigrette

menu #2} one-dish meal
baked beans with kielbasa

menu #3} super simple supper
seared & baked halibut
buttered green beans
green salad with roasted tomato vinaigrette

ferments, soups, desserts}
sauerkraut with caraway
poached pears
autumn beef stew

supplemental recipes}
chicken stock
roasted tomatoes

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menu #1} spaghetti squash or spaghetti, spaghetti bolognese, green salad with italian herb vinaigrette

I love comfort food, and, for me, spaghetti bolognese with its rich flavors of garlic, tomatoes and spices is one of my favorites. Traditionally, bolognese sauce was prepared using chicken livers in addition to ground meat, and I like to keep this tradition alive as it contributes significant nourishment to the diet. Pair it with a simple green salad and serve it over spaghetti sauce or brown rice spaghetti noodles.

food for thought}

how & why this meal nourishes

chicken liver}

- is rich in preformed vitamin A as well as B vitamins like folate which is essential to women of reproductive age.

spaghetti squash}

- is rich in antioxidants like beta carotene.

tomatoes}

- are rich in lycopene, a powerful antioxidant known to support prostate health.

make this meal}

up to three days in advance}

- thaw chicken liver and ground beef, if frozen.
- prepare vegetables according to recipe requirements and store in individual, airtight containers in the fridge until ready to use.
- prepare vinaigrette, storing at room temperature.

about one hour in advance}

- bake squash, if not serving brown rice spaghetti.

about forty-five minutes in advance}

- prepare bolognese sauce.

about twenty minutes in advance}

- prepare brown rice spaghetti according to package instructions if not serving roasted spaghetti squash.

about five minutes in advance}

- plate salad, dress at the table.

this meal is scheduled for}



recipes for menu #1} bolognese sauce, roasted spaghetti squash

bolognese sauce} skill level: easy |
yield: about 4 servings | time: about 45 minutes
(stovetop)

ingredients

- 1/4 cup butter*
- 4 ribs celery, finely chopped
- 4 carrots, scraped and finely chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled and minced
- 1 small yellow onion, peeled and chopped
- 1/4 lb chicken livers, minced or ground
- 1 lb ground beef
- 1 quart pureed roasted tomatoes
- 2 cups red wine**
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 2 tbsps chopped fresh basil
- 2 tbsps chopped fresh oregano

equipment

- heavy-bottomed saucepan

method

1. Melt butter in a heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium heat. When it froths, stir in chopped celery, chopped carrot, minced garlic and chopped onion. Fry until fragrant, about three minutes.
2. Stir in minced chicken livers and ground beef, frying until cooked through, about eight minutes. Pour in roasted tomatoes and red wine, reduce heat, and simmer on medium-low for thirty minutes.
3. Remove from heat, stir in fresh herbs and serve over spaghetti or spaghetti squash.

***Dairy-free?** Substitute olive oil or bacon fat for butter.

****Alcohol-free?** Substitute beef stock for wine.

roasted spaghetti squash} skill level:
easy | yield: about 4 servings | time: about 45
minutes (oven)

ingredients

- 1 large spaghetti squash

equipment

- baking dish

method

1. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Split the squash and scrape out its seeds. Place it, inverted, in a baking dish and pour in about two cups water.
3. Bake the squash until its skin and flesh yield easily when pierced by a fork, about forty-five minutes.
4. When the squash is cool enough to handle comfortably, scrape out its flesh and serve it as a base for bolognese sauce.

NOTE: If you do not wish to serve your bolognese sauce over spaghetti squash, substitute one package of Tinkyada brown rice spaghetti; cook according to instructions on the package.



recipes for menu #1} italian herb vinaigrette

italian herb vinaigrette} skill level:

easy | serves: 4 | 5 minutes (active)

ingredients

for the vinaigrette

- 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
- 1 shallot, peeled and minced
- 1 clove garlic, peeled and minced
- 2 tbsps fresh basil, minced
- 2 tbsps fresh flat-leaf parsley, minced
- 1 tsp fresh oregano, minced
- 3/4 cup unrefined extra virgin olive oil

for the salad

- 8 cups mixed salad greens
- 1 red onion, peeled and sliced into thin rounds

equipment

- mixing bowl
- whisk
- mason jar or salad dressing cruet
- serving dish

method

1. Whisk vinegar with shallot, garlic, basil, parsley and oregano. Whisk in olive oil and store in a salad dressing cruet or mason jar until ready to serve.
2. Plate greens and red onion, dress with vinaigrette at the table.

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menu #2} baked beans with kielbasa and caramelized onions

There are many, many days when I am tired and not particularly in the mood to cook in the evenings. On these evenings, I make simple one-dish meals like this version of baked beans with kielbasa and caramelized onions. To make it easier, consider cooking beans simply in advance and storing them in the freezer where they can be easily accessed when time and energy are pinched. I serve this meal with sauerkraut - our ferment of the week.

food for thought}

how & why this meal nourishes

pasture-raised pork}

- is an excellent source of protein.
- offers a favorable ratio of omega-3 to omega-6 fatty acids.
- is rich in monounsaturated fatty acids, healthy fats that are also found in avocados and olive oil.

soaked white beans}

- are rich in folate, a B vitamin that is essential in mitigating the risk of neural tube defects for babies in the womb.
- have been prepared to mitigate the effects of naturally occurring antinutrients which bind up minerals in the digestive tract, preventing their full absorption.

make this meal}

at least a week in advance}

- prepare sauerkraut, using bonus recipes, if serving.
- prepare stock, using supplemental recipe.

at least a day in advance}

- begin soaking beans.

at least two hours in advance}

- begin cooking beans.

about an hour in advance}

- begin assembling baked beans with kielbasa and caramelized onions.

this meal is scheduled for}



recipes for menu #2} baked beans with kielbasa and caramelized onions

baked beans with kielbasa and
caramelized onions} skill level: easy |
serves: 4+ leftovers | time: 12 to 24 hours (soak-
ing beans), 1 hour (cooking beans), 10 minutes
(stovetop), 40 minutes (oven)

ingredients

to soak and prepare the beans

- 2 cups white beans, picked over and rinsed
- pinch baking soda

for the baked beans with kielbasa and car- amelized onions

- 3 tbsps butter*
- 3 large yellow onions, peeled and sliced in rounds no thicker than 1/4-inch
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and chopped
- 1 lb nitrate/nitrite-free pastured pork kielbasa sausages**, sliced into rounds about 1/2-inch thick
- 1/4 cup unrefined cane sugar***
- 2 teaspoons ground black pepper
- 1 1/2 cups chicken stock

3. Preheat oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit.
4. Melt butter in an oven-proof cast iron or enameled cast iron skillet. When the butter froths, toss in yellow onion and fry until caramelized and fragrant, about six minutes. Stir in the kielbasa and fry in the onions until browned.
5. Remove from heat, stir in cane sugar, black pepper and stock. Bake in an oven preheated to 375 degrees Fahrenheit for thirty to forty minutes.
6. Serve with sauerkraut.

***Dairy-free?** Substitute bacon fat, lard, clarified butter or grass-fed tallow for butter.

****Don't do pork?** Substitute grass-fed beef sausages.

*****On GAPS/SCD?** Substitute honey for unrefined cane sugar.

equipment

- stock pot
- oven-proof cast iron or enameled cast iron skillet

method

1. Toss beans in a large mixing bowl with a pinch of baking soda. Cover with hot water by two inches and allow them to soak at room temperature for twelve to twenty-four hours.
2. After twelve to twenty-four hours, drain the beans and rinse them well. Place them in a stockpot, cover with water and boil until tender, about an hour or so. Drain, rinse and reserve.



menu #3} seared and baked halibut, buttered green beans, green salad with roasted tomato vinaigrette

This past week, my family was terribly busy preparing for our communities annual harvest feast, and I prepared this simple, but deeply nourishing meal for lunch and we were thoroughly satisfied and nourished enough to continue through several more grueling days of organizing, cooking and celebrating.

food for thought} how & why this meal nourishes

wild-caught halibut}

- is an excellent source of complete protein.
- is rich in B vitamins.
- is extraordinarily rich in omega-3 fatty acids, wholesome fats that are essential for cognitive health.

grass-fed butter}

- is a healthy fat that is rich in vitamins A and K2, as well as conjugated linoleic acid and trans-palmitoleic acid.

tomatoes}

- are rich in lycopene, a powerful antioxidant known to support prostate health.

make this meal}

up to three days in advance}

- prepare vinaigrette, store in the fridge.
- thaw halibut, if frozen, and store in an airtight container in the fridge.
- prepare vegetables according to recipe instructions and store in an airtight container until ready to serve.

about twenty-five minutes in advance}

- sear and bake halibut.

about fifteen minutes in advance}

- prepare buttered green beans.

about five minutes in advance}

- plate salad, dress at the table.

this meal is scheduled for}

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recipes for menu #3} seared and baked halibut, buttered green beans
seared and baked halibut} skill level: easy | serves: 4 | time: 5 minutes (stovetop), 20 minutes (oven)
buttered green beans} skill level: easy | serves: 4 | time: under 5 minutes (active), 10 minutes (steaming)

ingredients

- 4 filets halibut (4- to 6-oz each)

equipment

- oven-proof cast iron or enameled cast iron skillet

method

1. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Heat your skillet over a moderate flame, and sear halibut on all sides. Transfer the halibut to the oven and bake at 375 degrees Fahrenheit for about twenty minutes or until it flakes easily with a fork.

ingredients

- 1 lb green beans, trimmed
- 2 tbsps butter*

equipment

- kettle
- mixing bowl
- kitchen towel

method

1. Bring at least a quart of water to boil in a kettle.
2. Place trimmed green beans in a large mixing bowl, and cover with boiling water. Allow beans to cook in the residual heat of the water for ten minutes, covered by a kitchen towel.
3. After ten minutes, drain the beans, place on a serving dish and dot with butter.

***Dairy-free?** Substitute coconut oil.



recipes for menu #3} greens with roasted tomato vinaigrette

roasted tomato vinaigrette} skill

level: easy | serves: 4 | 5 minutes (active)

ingredients

for the vinaigrette

- 2 tbsps pureed roasted tomatoes
- 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar*
- 1 shallot, peeled and minced
- 1 tbsp chopped fresh thyme leaves
- 3/4 cup unrefined extra virgin olive oil

for the salad

- 8 cups mixed salad greens
- 1 red onion, peeled and sliced into thin rounds

equipment

- mixing bowl
- whisk
- mason jar or salad dressing cruet
- serving dish

method

1. Whisk roasted tomatoes and vinegar with minced shallot and chopped thyme. Whisk in olive oil and store in a salad dressing cruet or mason jar until ready to serve.
2. Plate greens and red onion, dress with vinaigrette at the table.

***On GAPS/SCD?** Some lesser quality balsamic vinegars include sugar. You can substitute red wine vinegar.



bonus recipes} sauerkraut with caraway, poached pears, autumn beef stew

Our ferment of the week - sauerkraut with caraway - is lovely when paired with our one-dish meal of beans with kielbasa and caramelized onions. It is also good served alongside grass-fed frankfurters, roast pork or pork chops. I like to serve poached pears as a simple dessert for the week - and the pears' natural sweetness means that additional sugar or sweeteners is fully unnecessary. And I hope you'll love this autumn beef stew - a dish I served to a crowd of 275 revelers who loved its gentle sweetness.

food for thought} how & why this meal nourishes

chicken stock}

- is rich in gelatin, which soothes the stomach and promotes good digestive health.
- is rich in glucosamin-chondroitin, thought to promote joint health.
- is rich in trace minerals and represents an excellent dairy-free source of calcium.

butternut squash}

- is rich in antioxidants like beta carotene.

make ahead tips}

Ha! This week is easy! Our sauerkraut needs no whey, our beef stew needs no stock and our pears are ready in minutes.

Enjoy!



bonus recipes} sauerkraut with caraway

sauerkraut with caraway}

difficulty: easy | yield: 1 qt | time: 15 mins (active), 1 to 12 weeks (fermentation)

ingredients

- 2 small heads yellow or green cabbage, cored and shredded very finely
- 1 tablespoon caraway seeds
- 2 tablespoons unrefined sea salt

equipment

- mixing bowl
- mason jar with lid, fermentation crock or vegetable fermenter
- wooden spoon or thick dowel
- weight of some sort, preferable but not required

method

1. Toss all ingredients in a large mixing bowl.
2. Knead and squeeze the cabbage and salt mixture thoroughly by hand to break up the structure of the cabbage shreds. They should be limp, almost translucent and should release their juice readily.
3. Layer this mixture of kneaded salt and cabbage into a mason jar and pound it down with a wooden spoon or dowel so that the sauerkraut is thoroughly packed into your fermentation vessel.
4. Continue layering and pounding until your cabbage and apple mixture is exhausted, the cabbage is thoroughly packed within the jar and the level of brine exceeds the level of the solids.

5. Weight the cabbage, if using a weight, to prevent it from floating to the top of the brine and contaminating your sauerkraut, cover, and allow to ferment at room temperature for at least one week before tasting it. If you prefer a stronger sauerkraut, allow it to ferment for an extended period of time until it achieves the desired level of sourness.
6. Transfer to cold storage. Sauerkraut will keep for one year, properly fermented and properly stored.



bonus recipes} poached pears, autumn beef stew

poached pears} skill level: easy | yield: 4 servings | time: 15 minutes (stovetop)

ingredients

- 4 pears, peeled
- 2 cups sweet white wine*
- 1 vanilla bean
- 1 cinnamon stick

equipment

- saucepan deep enough to cover the pears

method

1. Place pears in a saucepan with wine. Pour in filtered water until the liquid completely submerges the pears. Add vanilla bean and cinnamon stick.
2. Bring to a simmer and simmer until pears are tender, about four minutes.
3. Drain and serve.

***Alcohol-free?** Substitute apple juice or cider for wine.

autumn beef stew} skill level: easy | yield: 4 servings + leftovers | time: 10 minutes (stovetop), 12 to 14 hours (slowcooker)

ingredients

- 2 lbs grass-fed beef stew meat
- 1/2 tsp ground black pepper
- 1/2 tsp unrefined sea salt
- 1/4 cup butter*
- 8 carrots, peeled and chopped
- 5 celery ribs, chopped
- 1 yellow onion, peeled and chopped
- 1/2 lb potatoes**, chopped
- 1/2 cup pureed roasted tomatoes
- 1 quart apple cider
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 tbsps chopped fresh thyme leaves

equipment

- heavy-bottomed stock pot
- slowcooker

method

4. Season stew meat with salt and pepper. Melt butter, when it froths, stir in stew meat and brown on all sides.
5. Place brown stew meat, carrots, celery, onion, potatoes, roasted tomatoes, apple cider and bay leaf in a slowcooker and cook on low for twelve to fourteen hours.
6. Stir chopped fresh thyme into the stew immediately before serving.

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shopping list}

dairy & eggs}

- butter (1/2 cup, 1 tbsp)

meat, fish and fowl}

- chicken livers (1/4 lb)
- ground beef (1 lb)
- kielbasa (1 lb)SA
- chicken stock (1 1/2 cups)HM
- halibut (4 filets, 4- to 6-oz each)
- beef stew meat (2 lbs)

fresh produce}

- celery (9 ribs)
- carrots (12)
- garlic (7 cloves)
- shallot (2)
- yellow onion (5)
- chopped fresh parsley (1/4 cup, 2 tbsps)
- chopped fresh basil (1/4 cup)
- chopped fresh oregano (2 tbsps, 1 tsp)
- chopped fresh thyme (3 tbsps)
- salad greens (16 cups)
- red onion (2)
- green beans (1 lb)
- pears (4)
- potatoes (1/2 lb)SA
- **spaghetti squash (1 large)**

pantry & dried goods}

- red wine vinegar (1/4 cup)
- balsamic vinegar (1/4 cup)
- olive oil (1 1/2 cups)
- white beans (2 cups)
- cane sugar (1/4 cup)SA
- **brown rice spaghetti (1 package)**
-

spices}

- unrefined sea salt
- ground black pepper
- cinnamon stick (1)
- vanilla bean (1)
- bay leaf (1)

misc.}

- pureed roasted tomatoes (1 quart, 1 cup, 2 tbsps)HM
- red wine (2 cups)SA
- sweet white wine (2 cups)SA
- baking soda (pinch)
- apple cider (1 quart)

about your ingredients}

Dairy: Choose raw milk, cream and butter when you can, provided they're from cows raised on pasture. Avoid ultrapasteurized dairy products.

Eggs: Choose farm-fresh eggs from hens raised on fresh pasture with plenty of access to grass, bugs, sprouts and other forage.

Pantry Items: Choose organic, local and raw when and where possible.

Fresh Produce: Choose organic, local vegetables when possible.

Meat, Fish & Fowl: Choose locally and naturally raised meats from animals allowed to graze on fresh pastures.

SA: Substitution available, see recipe.

HM: Preferably homemade, see supplemental recipes.

O: Optional ingredient.

If preparing spaghetti for menu #1: Omit spaghetti squash.

If preparing spaghetti squash for menu #1: Omit 1 package brown rice spaghetti.

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shopping list/supplemental recipes} chicken stock

roast chicken stock}

skill level: easy | time: 5 mins (active), 24 hrs

(slowcooker)

ingredients

- 1 chicken frame
- 1 gallon vegetable scraps (onion tops, carrot peels, celery leaves, leek, parsley, etc.)
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tbsp apple cider vinegar

equipment

- slowcooker

method

1. Pick the chicken carcass clean of useable meat and reserve that for another dish.
2. Add the chicken carcass, vegetable scraps and bay leaves to a crockpot.
3. Pour filtered water over the carcass to cover.
4. Add cider vinegar.
5. Cook in your slow cooker on low heat for 24-hrs or longer.
6. By adding water to the cooker, you can continue to cook the broth until the chicken bones become flexible and rubbery.
7. Strain the broth through a fine mesh sieve and pour into mason jars.
8. The broth should gel, but it is not necessary.

roast tomatoes}

skill level: easy | time: 5 mins (active), 2 1/2 hrs

(oven)

ingredients

- 2 lbs roma tomatoes, halved
- 2 tbsps olive oil
- 1/2 tsp unrefined sea salt

equipment

- baking sheet
- parchment paper
-

method

1. Preheat the oven to 225 degrees Fahrenheit. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Layer tomatoes on the parchment paper-lined baking sheet, drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with unrefined sea salt. Roast the tomatoes in an oven preheated to 225 degrees Fahrenheit for two and a half to three hours.
3. Use immediately or store in the refrigerator, covered with olive oil, for up to one week.

