

Made From Scratch



Budget friendly winter meals

Holidays can be great, but they're also one of the most expensive times of the year. Try one of these budget-friendly recipes that taste great, are easy to make, and won't break the bank.

Cajun meatloaf

Ingredients

- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 3 green onions, trimmed and chopped
- 2 ribs celery, finely chopped
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1/2 green bell pepper, seeded and finely chopped
- 2 1/2 Tbsp Cajun or Creole seasoning
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 2 Tbsp low-sodium Worcestershire sauce
- 2 lbs. ground sirloin beef (extra lean)
- 1 lb. ground turkey breast
- 4 large egg whites, lightly beaten
- 1 cup fine dry breadcrumbs
- 1/3 cup low-sodium tomato ketchup
- 1/2 tsp salt (optional)

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the green onions, celery, onion, garlic and bell pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are nicely browned, about 10 minutes.
3. Stir in Cajun or Creole seasoning, black pepper, and Worcestershire sauce. Cool to room temperature.
4. Mix the ground beef, turkey, reserved vegetable mixture, egg whites, breadcrumbs, ketchup, and salt in a large bowl until well combined. Shape into two meatloaves and place them into 12x6-inch loaf pans.
5. Bake for 30 minutes. Increase oven temperature to 400°. Bake until nicely browned, about 30 minutes. Cool in pan for 5 to 10 minutes before removing and slicing into thick slices.

Servings: 4 | **Serving size:** 1 slice | **Nutrition facts per serving:** Calories 159; Total fat 6.3g; Saturated fat 1.4g; Carbohydrates 32.8g; Protein 12g

Pulled Mexican pork

Ingredients

- 1 cup 100% orange juice
- 1/2 cup 100% grapefruit juice
- 3 lbs. pork shoulder, trimmed, bone-in
- 1 cup water
- 1 medium onion, sliced
- 1 packet taco seasoning



Directions

1. Combine the orange and grapefruit juices and pork in a bowl. Cover and refrigerate overnight.
2. Drain pork and add it to a slow cooker along with the remaining ingredients.
3. Cook on high for 4 hours or until fork tender and your thermometer reads a minimum of 145°.
4. While meat is still in the slow cooker, use two forks to pull meat off the bone and shred it into pieces.

Servings: 12 | **Serving size:** 1/3 cup | **Nutrition facts per serving:** Calories 140; Total fat 5g; Saturated fat 2g; Sodium 350mg; Carbohydrates 5g; Fiber 0g; Protein 17g

Recipe note: This simple protein-packed recipe could be used for tacos, burritos, or as a sandwich on a whole-grain bun.

Savory penne with lentils and kale

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup brown lentils
- 1 Tbsp light olive oil
- 1/2 cup onion, chopped
- 1 tsp garlic, minced
- 2 cups dry whole-wheat penne pasta
- 1 1/2 cups canned crushed tomatoes
- 2 1/2 cups water
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/8 tsp black pepper
- 1/2 tsp dried oregano
- 1/2 tsp dried basil
- 1 cup frozen kale, chopped
- 1/4 cup walnuts, chopped
- 2 Tbsp fresh parsley, for garnish



Directions

1. Rinse lentils in a fine mesh strainer and remove any debris.
2. Heat olive oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat for 1 minute. Add onions and cook for 4 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add garlic and cook 1 minute, stirring constantly.
3. To the pan, add lentils, pasta, crushed tomatoes, 2 1/2 cups water, salt, black pepper, oregano and basil. Stir to combine, then cover with a lid and reduce heat to low. Set a timer for 18 minutes.
4. After the timer goes off, lift the lid and place the frozen kale on top of the mixture. Replace the lid and cook for another 4 minutes or until the lentils are tender.
5. Serve in bowls and top evenly with chopped walnuts and parsley.

Servings: 6 | **Serving size:** 1 1/4 cups | **Nutrition facts per serving:** Calories 217; Total fat 6g; Saturated fat 1g; Sodium 212mg; Carbohydrates 35g; Fiber 7g; Protein 9g

Recipe note: Lentils are high in protein, which helps build and maintain your muscles, bones, and skin. Protein can also help you manage your appetite because it makes you feel fuller than other nutrients.

Slow-cooker minestrone soup

Ingredients

- 6 cups vegetable broth
- 1 (28 oz) can diced tomatoes
- 1 (15 oz) can cannellini beans drained and rinsed
- 1 (15 oz) can kidney beans drained and rinsed
- 2 cups frozen green beans
- 4 medium carrots, chopped
- 1 medium zucchini, chopped
- 1 stalk celery, chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 Tbsp dried Italian seasoning
- 1 bay leaf
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp salt
- 3/4 tsp pepper
- 1 cup cooked whole-grain elbow pasta
- 2 cups fresh baby spinach
- 1 1/4 cups freshly grated Parmesan cheese (optional, for garnish)

Directions

1. Combine ingredients, except pasta and baby spinach, in a 6- or 7-quart slow cooker. Cover and cook on low for 7 to 8 hours.
2. Increase heat to high. Stir in pasta and spinach. Cover and cook for 15 minutes or until pasta is done.
3. Remove bay leaf before serving. Sprinkle each serving with 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese, if desired.

Servings: 10 | **Serving size:** 1 1/2 cups | **Nutrition facts per serving:** Calories 134; Total fat 0.5g; Saturated fat 0g; Sodium 860mg; Carbohydrates 26g; Fiber 7g; Protein 6g

Recipe note: Reduce the sodium in this recipe by using low-sodium vegetable broth in place of regular vegetable broth.