

## Sandwiches & Pasta

Welcome to the first week of the Veggie Challenge. For each day, we have prepared a selection of recipes based on a theme. For Monday it is sandwiches and pasta.

### Pasta

Cook up your favourite noodles, then add a sauce such as tomato, pesto, mushroom, or just herbs and olive oil. For a heartier meal add in some diced tofu, chickpeas, lentils or nuts. Toss in some steamed veggies or serve on the side. Pasta is best cooked until al dente (tender but firm). Taste it to tell, then add cold water or drain right away to stop the cooking process.

**Quick:** Sauces can be purchased ready-made, but it is nice to add some extra veggies.

**Gluten-free:** Rice pasta is a nice gluten-free option, but make sure not to over-cook as it can turn to mush.

### Sandwiches

These are some of the fastest meals to make, especially when eating alone. Start with your favourite bread, tortilla, rice cracker, wrap, etc.

- Add a spread such as mashed avocado, hummus, a store-bought dip, nut butter or tahini. Or instead of a spread use butter, coconut butter, mayo (vegan versions are available), flax oil or olive oil.
- Next add lots of fresh salad veggies such as cucumber, lettuce, kale, sprouts, avocado, tomato or even apple or pear slices. For a more substantial sandwich throw in some veggie 'meats', burgers, falafel, cheese, or cooked tofu or tempeh.
- Include a favourite condiment such as dijon mustard, sauerkraut or salsa and add salt and pepper to taste. The possibilities are endless.

A **healthy** variation is to have a whole-grain open-face sandwich with lots of veggies.

## Toasted Sandwich with Black Olive Hummus

MAKES 2 SANDWICHES, <20 MINUTES

|  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 4 slices whole-grain bread or 2 buns, toasted          | 1 tomatoes, sliced                  |
| 4 oz (115 g) hummus from a package                     | 1/4 cucumber, sliced                |
| 6 black olives, pitted (or buy olive-flavoured hummus) | 2 leaves of lettuce or other greens |
|  | Pepper to taste                     |

**Assemble** each sandwich by applying a layer of hummus, three olives, two slices of tomato, two slices of cucumber, and one folded lettuce leaf. Add pepper to taste.

**Variations:** Try different flavours of hummus. Try it as an open-face sandwich. Use a wrap, pita or gluten-free bread.

## Pasta with Broccoli, Tomatoes & Pine Nuts

SERVES 2, <30 MINUTES

|   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1/2 lb (225 g) your choice of whole-grain pasta | 2 Tbsp (20 g) pine nuts              |
| 1 head broccoli                                 | A big pinch of chili powder          |
| 1/2 Tbsp olive oil                              | 1 (14 oz / 400 g) can diced tomatoes |
| 1 garlic cloves, chopped                        | Fresh parsley as garnish             |

**Boil water** for pasta. Prepare according to package directions.

**Meanwhile**, steam or boil broccoli pieces until tender crisp.

**Sauté garlic** in oil in a large frying pan until lightly brown.

• Add pine nuts, chili powder and tomatoes, and simmer over medium heat for 5 to 10 minutes. • Stir in the cooked broccoli and drained pasta.

**Serve** with fresh parsley.

### Time-saving tips

**BE SIMPLE** – There is no need to always use a dozen different ingredients.

**ALWAYS HAVE A POT OF GRAINS COOKED** – Get in the habit of making a large amount of brown rice, quinoa or other grain. Then use it to quickly make a rice bowl, to add to a soup, or to go with a quick stir fry.

**HAVE COOKED BEANS, CHICKPEAS OR LENTILS READY** – Great for instant use in quick dishes. Stock up on cans or plan ahead and cook legumes from scratch. You need to soak dry beans the night

before. Rinse, bring to a boil and simmer till tender. A pressure cooker is ideal.

**MAKE SOME EXTRA!** – Leftovers can be stored in the fridge or frozen in individual servings for quick future meals.

**DON'T OVER CHOP** – There is a tendency for enthusiastic beginner cooks to chop everything into tiny pieces. For many recipes, larger bite-sized pieces are nice.

**PREPARING FOR A RECIPE** – Bring out all the necessary ingredients for the recipe before you start.

### Healthy eating tips

**MAKE SALADS AND GREENS PART OF YOUR ROUTINE** – Vary the greens to get maximum nutrition. Try romaine, green or red leaf lettuce, kale, spinach, sprouts, etc. For extra flavour, add tomato, cucumber, shredded carrot, sunflower seeds, avocado, raisins, etc. Or drink a daily green smoothie.

**USE ORGANIC INGREDIENTS WHEN POSSIBLE** for their added flavour and nutrition, and to reduce your exposure to pesticides. Farmers' markets have the best selection and prices.

**MINIMIZE YOUR USE OF OILS AND FATS**, especially processed fats like margarine.

**OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND** – Don't buy anything that will be a temptation for you.

## Rice bowl / Noodle bowl

*A cross between a salad and a hearty meal, rice and noodle bowls are very easy to make, satisfyingly healthy and endlessly variable.*

### Rice Bowl

Fill a bowl with cooked brown rice and top with a simple sauce made from tahini or almonds (tahini/almond butter, water, lemon, garlic and salt). Add steamed or fresh greens, toasted seeds and avocado slices.

**Options:** add cucumber, pickled or grated ginger, nori seaweed or tofu or tempeh (lightly pan-fried).

**Quick:** Skip the sauce and simply top with flax oil and soy sauce (or Bragg's). If you don't have cooked rice on hand, use quinoa instead. It takes only 15-20 minutes to cook, versus 40 minutes for brown rice.

### Noodle Bowl

Follow the same steps for making a rice bowl, but use rice noodles or soba (buckwheat) noodles instead.

## Green Goddess Rice Bowl

**SERVES 2, <30 MINUTES**

*This recipe was inspired by a signature dish at Fresh restaurant in Toronto.*

1 cup (120 g) greens (kale, broccoli, bok choy, spinach, etc.)

1/2 cup (80 g) sunflower seeds

2 cups (350 g) cooked brown rice (see recipe next page)

Tahini sauce (recipe below)

**Lightly steam** greens – don't overcook – or they will taste horrible and you'll lose valuable nutrition.

**Lightly toast** sunflower seeds in toaster oven or in a dry skillet (you'll only need a couple of tablespoons per serving – keep any extra in a jar for future use.)

**Assembly:** Add half a cup of rice to each bowl. • Add tahini sauce. • Top with steamed greens and sprinkle with sunflower seeds.

**Variations:** Use soba (3 oz/85 g per serving) or other whole-grain noodles in place of rice. Add marinated or sautéed tofu for extra protein. Top with sliced avocado, pickled ginger, and mineral-rich nori seaweed. This dish can be served warm or cold.

## Tahini sauce

**MAKES 1/2 CUP (130 ML)**

*Tahini is a seed butter made from sesame. It makes a delicious sauce when combined with lemon.*

1/4 cup (60 ml) water

3 Tbsp (45 g) tahini

1 clove fresh crushed garlic

2 Tbsp (30 ml) lemon juice  
(half of a large lemon)

1/2 tsp salt (or less)

**Stir ingredients** in a jar, or blend in a blender until smooth. Add extra water for a thinner sauce. (Store any extra sauce in the fridge for future use).

## Steamed Vegetables with Noodles

**SERVES 2-3, <40 MINUTES**

*This is more of a cooked version of a noodle bowl. Great for veggies like broccoli that are delicious steamed.*

8 oz (225 g) soba or rice noodles (1 package)

1 head broccoli, cut into 2-inch spears (peel outer skin from stalks if tough)

2 carrots (cut into diagonal slices about 1/4-inch thick)

1 red peppers, sliced

1/2 head cauliflower (break into 1-inch florets)

Miso-almond sauce (see recipe below)

**Fill a large pot** with water and bring to a boil. • Add the noodles to the boiling water in the first pot. Cover and turn heat to medium. Follow package directions for cooking time (usually 6-8 minutes).

**Place a steamer** over 1 inch of water in another pot and bring to a boil. • Arrange vegetables in steamer and cover. • Cook over medium heat until tender. Don't overcook.

**Drain** the noodles and add about 1/4-cup (60 ml) of miso-almond sauce and mix. • Serve vegetables on top of noodles and ladle additional sauce over the vegetables.

**Variations:** Try using other vegetables, such as snow peas, zucchini, bok choy, green beans, asparagus, etc. Other sauces can also be used or simply top with tamari soy sauce and grated ginger.

## Miso-Almond Sauce

**MAKES 1 CUP (240 ML)**

*Miso is a salty fermented soy paste traditionally used in Asian cooking.*

3 Tbsp (45 g) light miso

4 Tbsp (60 g) almond butter

1/2 cup (120 ml) boiling water

**Place** the miso and almond butter in a medium sized bowl. • Add half the water and mash with a spoon until it becomes a uniform paste.

**Add** the remaining water, and mix until well combined.

**Serve** over hot steamed vegetables and tofu, or mix into hot noodles.

## Indian-style curry

We go international for Wednesday with these classic Indian vegetarian dishes.

### Indian curry

Cook lentils, chickpeas or potatoes with curry paste, then add veggies. Delicious served on brown rice. Curry paste (sold by the jar) is a real time saver, but you can make it yourself with any combination of cumin, coriander, mustard seed, turmeric, hot pepper, oil or vinegar, garlic or ginger. Fresh spices are best.

**Quick:** Save time by using canned chickpeas, parboiled rice or quinoa. Or serve with Indian flat bread (roti, naan, chapattis).

### Red Lentil Dhal

**SERVES 2, <40 MINUTES**

This recipe always turns out rich, spicy and satisfying. Using curry paste (sold by the jar) makes it fast and simple to prepare.

|                                 |                              |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1/2 cup (100 g) dry red lentils | 1 tomato, chopped (optional) |
| 1/2 large onion, chopped        | Cinnamon stick (optional)    |
| 1/2 Tbsp oil for frying         | 1/2 Tbsp Indian curry paste* |
| 2 cups (450 ml) water           | Salt to taste                |

**Sift through** the lentils and remove any tiny rocks (some brands are better than others).

**In a large pot**, sauté onion with oil and curry paste until softened.

**Add** rinsed lentils, water and optional tomato and cinnamon stick.

**Bring to a boil** then simmer covered at a low boil for 20 minutes until the lentils become creamy.

**Add salt** to taste.

**Serve** as a soup or over rice.

\* **Note:** if you can't find curry paste for sale, see recipe below.

### Quick Veggie Masala

**SERVES 2, <40 MINUTES**

This dish is quick when you already have the rice cooked. You can also save time and add nutrition by not peeling the potatoes.

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 2 medium potatoes, chopped  | 1 cup (150 g) green vegetables, such as peas, green beans or spinach, chopped |
| 1/2 onion, diced            | 1 tomato, chopped   |
| 1/2 Tbsp oil                | 1 tsp lemon juice (optional)  |
| 1/2 Tbsp Indian curry paste | 2 cups (350 g) cooked brown rice (see recipe below)                           |
| 1/4 cup (60 ml) of water    |   |

**Boil** or steam potatoes for 15 minutes.

**In a separate pot**, sauté onion, oil and curry paste until onion is browned. • Stir in vegetables, potatoes, water and tomatoes, and cook gently until tender.

**Sprinkle** with lemon juice and serve over generous portions of brown rice.

**Variations:** Add cooked chickpeas or lentils for an extra hit of protein. This dish also goes well with rotis or chapattis.

### Brown Basmati Rice

**MAKES 3 CUPS (1/2 KG), <50 MINUTES**

|                                  |                       |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 cup (185 g) brown basmati rice | 2 cups (480 ml) water |
|                                  | 1 tsp salt            |

**Bring** rice, water and salt to a boil in a pot with a tight-fitting lid.

**Simmer** for 40 minutes on very low heat. Do not lift lid or stir!

**Variations:** add a small handful of cloves, cardamom pods, whole black peppercorns or lemon peel to the rice before cooking.

### Basic Curry Paste

**MAKES 1/2 CUP (120 ML), <20 MINUTES**

|                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 2 Tbsp coriander seeds               | 1 tsp ground turmeric                         |
| 1 Tbsp cumin seeds                   | 2 garlic cloves, crushed                      |
| 1 tsp brown mustard seeds            | 1 Tbsp grated fresh ginger                    |
| 1/2 tsp cracked black peppercorns    | 1 tsp salt                                    |
| 1/2 to 2 tsp chili powder or cayenne | 3 Tbsp (45 ml) vinegar (white or apple cider) |

**Roast coriander** and cumin seeds in a dry pan until fragrant. Then grind the seeds using a coffee grinder or mortar and pestle.

**Put all ingredients** except vinegar into a small bowl and mix together well. Add more or less chili depending on how hot you want it. • Add the vinegar and mix to a smooth paste.

**Note:** Keeps for up to one month in a jar in fridge.

## Stir-fry / Salad meals

Today we have two themes. Easy stir-frys and substantial salads that can be meals unto themselves.

### Stir-fry

Stir-frys are fast and tasty. Fry any combination of fresh vegetables, onions, tofu, tempeh, packaged veggie meats, nuts or seeds. If necessary, add a splash of water early on to prevent the oil from smoking, or lower the heat. For flavour, use soy sauce, ginger, garlic, hot pepper or a dab of toasted sesame oil. To create a sauce, add about a half-cup of water when the vegetables are half cooked, and simmer. The liquid can be thickened by adding 1 Tbsp of cornstarch dissolved in 2 Tbsp of cold water.

**Tip:** Add in any greens near the end as they don't take very long to cook. Keep it super healthy by only using a small amount of oil. Serve on rice, quinoa, couscous or pasta.

### Substantial salads

Start with cooked potatoes, lentils, beans, rice or quinoa. Add fresh veggies – there are dozens to choose from. Then top with fresh herbs, sunflower seeds, sliced almonds, croutons, avocado, artichoke, olives, sunflower sprouts, etc. Apply your favourite store-bought dressing or just drizzle on some flax or olive oil along with salt, lemon juice or vinegar. See our Salads page online for more ideas.

## Greek Salad

**SERVES 2, <30 MINUTES**

- 1/4 head of romaine lettuce, washed and chopped
- 1/4 English cucumber, sliced on the diagonal
- 1 ripe tomato, sliced
- 1/2 small red onion, chopped
- 2 Tbsp (25 g) black olives (Kalamata)
- 5 cherry tomatoes, cut into halves
- 1/4 cup (35 g) feta cheese, crumbled (for a vegan soy feta see salad page online)

#### DRESSING INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 Tbsp balsamic (or red wine) vinegar
- 1 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- Dash of salt

Toss salad in a bowl. Arrange artfully.

**Combine dressing** ingredients in a small jar and shake. • Pour on dressing just before serving.

**Garnish** with black pepper.

## Walnut Broccoli Stir-Fry

**SERVES 2, <40 MINUTES**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1 onion, chopped   | 1/2 cup (60 g) walnuts   |
| 1 carrot, chopped  | 1/2 cup (120 ml) water   |
| 1 Tbsp oil   | 1/2 Tbsp cornstarch, dissolved in one Tbsp cold water (optional) |
| 1/2 cup (35 g) mushrooms, such as fresh shiitake, sliced | 1 1/2 Tbsp (20 ml) soy sauce                                     |
| 1/2 head of broccoli, coarsely chopped                   | Salt and pepper to taste   |

**Sauté** onions and carrots with oil in a wok or large pot until onion is tender.

**Add mushrooms**, broccoli and nuts, and stir for one or two minutes.

**Add the water**, cover with a lid, and simmer for a few minutes until broccoli is bright green. Don't overcook.

**Add soy sauce**, salt and pepper, and cornstarch dissolved in cold water (to thicken the sauce)

**Serve** with brown rice (40-minute cooking time), quinoa (17 min.) or whole-grain noodles (10 min.).

**Variations:** Be creative! Experiment with different combinations of fresh veggies, tofu, tempeh, seeds or nuts. For more flavour, try adding ginger, garlic or hot pepper.

## Spinach & Lentil Salad with Balsamic-Orange Dressing

**SERVES 2, <30 MINUTES**

Try this tasty salad served with whole-grain bread.

- 1/2 bunch of fresh spinach, washed
- 1/2 orange, peeled and sectioned
- 1 Tbsp almond slivers
- 1/2 cup (110 g) brown or green lentils from a can (or cooked\*)

#### DRESSING INGREDIENTS

- Zest and juice of half an orange
- 1/2 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 1/2 Tbsp (20 ml) extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 Tbsp Dijon mustard
- Salt and pepper

**Rinse** lentils then combine with spinach, almonds and orange.

**Whisk** dressing ingredients together. • Add salt and pepper to taste.

\* When dry, these larger lentils need to be boiled then simmered for up to 30 minutes until soft.

Based on a recipe by Casey Young (she and her husband took the Veggie Challenge).

## Taco/Tortillas, Pizza

The theme today is comfort foods.

### Tacos or Tortillas

Buy some tortillas or other flat corn breads (or make your own) and top with all the fixings – spiced beans, salsa, tomato, greens and avocado. Garnish with fresh coriander.

**Quick:** Simply buy a taco kit and use a can of refried beans or packaged veggie ground ‘meat’ instead the suggested ground beef.

Keep it **super healthy** by buying (or making) tortillas with only 3 ingredients: corn, water & lime – no oil! They’re often sold frozen at natural food stores and fresh at Latino markets. Very convenient to use. Toast them straight out of the freezer in a toaster oven (but be careful – they burn quickly).

### Pizza

The most delicious option is to buy a package of **fresh pizza dough** at the supermarket (look for whole wheat) or make your own from scratch. **First**, apply a layer of sauce (pizza tomato sauce, a container of pesto or just drizzle on some olive oil and salt at the end). **Then** add your favourite toppings such as: green and red peppers, mushrooms, tomatoes, artichoke hearts, sun-dried tomatoes, basil, olives, cheese (Daiya is the best vegan option), veggie pepperoni, etc. **For a cheeseless pizza** try adding extra olives for richness.

**Quick:** Buy fresh pita bread or a store-bought crust.

**Gluten-free** pizza crusts are available in stores and online.

### Pesto Pizza

**SERVES 2-4, <30 MINUTES**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| 1 (12 oz / 340 g) pre-baked pizza crust* | 1/4 tsp chili pepper flakes (optional)                     |
| 2 Tbsp pesto, store-bought               | 1/2 cup (70 g) grated cheese (optional) or use vegan Daiya |
| 1 tomato, sliced                         | 1/2 cup (30 g) fresh basil leaves                          |
| 1 zucchini, thinly sliced                |  |

**Spread pesto** evenly over crust, leaving a small border. Top with rest of ingredients, except basil.

**Bake** at 400°F (200°C) for 8 minutes or until crust is golden. Apply basil.

**\* Note:** A less expensive and delicious option is to buy a package of fresh pizza dough at the supermarket (look for whole wheat), or make your own from scratch. For a crispier pizza, pre-bake crust on an oiled baking sheet at 400°F (200°C) for 10 minutes, then apply toppings.

## Mexican Black Beans with Tacos or Tortillas

**SERVES 2, <40 MINUTES**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| 8 corn tacos or tortillas  | <b>TOPPINGS</b>                                  |
| 3 Tbsp (45 ml) water   | 1 tomato, diced                                  |
| 1/2 red onion, finely diced  | 1 cup (60 g), shredded lettuce                   |
| 2 Tbsp (15 g) Mexican seasoning (Frontier Organics, El Paso package) | 1/2 red peppers, diced                           |
| 10 oz (270 g) black beans, from a can or cooked                      | 1/2 green pepper, diced                          |
| 1 Tbsp salsa (mild or hot)   | 1/4 cup (35 g), shredded vegan cheese (optional) |
| 1/4 lime, juiced   |  |

**Heat water** in a medium saucepan. When it’s boiling, add half the diced onions and taco seasoning and stir to combine evenly.

**Drain and rinse beans**, then add along with the salsa and lime juice. Stir and let cook for about 5 to 7 minutes.

**Stir and let cook** for about 5 to 7 minutes. If you have a hand immersion blender, puree the beans or mash with a potato masher (they’ll hold up better on the tostada shells).

**Prepare** any or all of the toppings.

**Spread** a thick layer of the mashed beans on the toasted corn tortillas or in the tacos and serve with toppings, the rest of the diced onions and guacamole (recipe follows).

### Guacamole

**SERVES 2, <10 MINUTES**

|                    |              |
|--------------------|--------------|
| 1 ripe avocados    | 1/4 tsp salt |
| 1/2-1 lime, juiced |              |

**Mash** the avocados with a fork. Add lime and salt to taste. Stir until evenly combined.

**Variations:** Guacamole is delicious when simple, but you can also add a clove of crushed garlic, diced red onion, fresh chopped cilantro, a few dashes of hot sauce or salsa, and/or finely diced tomatoes.

## Fancier recipes

Today's recipes are more gourmet than the ones during the week. They are nice for a special evening – either relaxing alone or with guests. They are a little more involved but still easy to make.

### Risotto

Fry onion or leek and chopped mushrooms (wild or shiitake are nice) in the bottom of a large pot until soft. Add dry brown rice and fry for 2 minutes. Then add twice as much water as rice, and a soup stock cube. Add some chopped carrots, squash, chickpeas or beans for a heartier version. Add salt and pepper to taste. Cover and simmer until everything is soft and saucy – about 40 minutes. Check on it a few times, stir and add water as needed. Adding a green vegetable closer to the end such as asparagus, green beans, zucchini or broccoli adds colour and nutrition.

### Quinotto

For a faster risotto try using quinoa.

*“My favorite meal, risotto, is still delicious without cheese and butter when rosemary and a flavorful balsamic are incorporated.”*

– Andrea, Vancouver

## Sauteed Greens

**SERVES 2, <20 MINUTES**

2-3 cups (225 g) washed greens (bok choy, kale, collards, rapini, spinach, etc.)

1 clove garlic, minced or crushed

1 Tbsp olive oil

Sea salt or soy sauce to taste

**Pour** 1/2 inch of water into a large pot and bring to a boil.

**Add greens**, cover and steam until wilted (about 2 minutes).

**Remove greens** and drain.

**In a large skillet**, heat the oil and add garlic. Sauté over medium heat for 30 seconds. Add greens and sauté for a few minutes. Don't overcook.

**Season** with salt or soy sauce.

**Variations:** Add diced ginger or hot pepper to the oil. Garnish with carrot slivers, sesame seeds or enoki mushrooms.

## Chickpea Risotto

**SERVES 2-3, <40 MINUTES, +20 WAITING**

Jenny, of the Veggie Challenge team, loves to add chickpeas to many of her dishes. Here's one of her favourites.

1/2 large onion, chopped

1/2 cup (40 g) mushrooms, chopped

1 Tbsp olive oil

1 cup (185 g) brown rice, uncooked

2 1/4 cups (500 ml) water

1/2 soup stock cube

10 oz (270 g) chickpeas, drained and rinsed (from a can or cooked)

**SEASONINGS:** salt, pepper, oregano or basil

3/4 cup (100 g) asparagus or green beans, chopped

Fresh Italian parsley as garnish

**In a large pot** with a tight fitting lid, sauté onion and mushrooms in oil. • When the onion becomes golden, add the rice and stir for two minutes.

**Add water**, stock cube, chickpeas and seasonings to taste. • Stir well, then cover and simmer until the rice is cooked (about 40 minutes).

**Near the end**, stir in asparagus or green beans • You may want to uncover towards the end to reduce the liquid, if necessary. Mix should be saucy. Garnish with parsley.

## Orange Teriyaki Tofu

**SERVES 2-3, <20 MINUTES + 1 HOUR BAKING**

Everyone who tried this simple dish at our recipe-testing meeting raved about it. The orange flavour really comes through.

8 oz (250 g) firm tofu

2 Tbsp (30 ml) soy sauce

1 1/2 Tbsp rice vinegar

1 1/2 Tbsp maple syrup

1/4 cup (120 ml) orange juice

1 tsp grated fresh ginger

1 clove garlic, minced or crushed

1/8 tsp dry mustard

1 tsp grated orange peel

**Cut tofu** into large bite-sized squares and place in a bowl. • Blend remaining ingredients. Pour over tofu.

**If time allows**, marinate for one hour or longer.

**Remove tofu** from marinade and place in a small casserole dish along with half of the marinade. Bake uncovered in preheated 350°F (175°C) oven for one hour, gently stirring and basting with marinade every 20 minutes.

**Garnish** with chopped parsley or fresh coriander. Serve with rice and salad.

## Hearty Soups & Chili

Sunday is a good day to clean out the fridge and make soup or chili out of any veggies you want to use up. Plus you can freeze portions for easy meals during the week.

### Hearty soup

Start with water or a soup base made from vegetable bouillon cubes, vegetable juice, tomato juice or packaged soup mixes (or add miso at the end). Add potatoes, split peas, lentils, barley, carrots, kale, spinach or any leftover vegetables. Season with bay leaves, salt, herbs or spices. For additional flavour, add fried onions or leeks, hot peppers or celery. For a blended soup, use a hand immersion blender in the pot. Serve with toasted bread, or a grain like quinoa or rice, on the side or combined with the soup.

### Chili

**15-minutes chili** - In a large pot, place a can or two of beans, a can of stewed tomatoes, any quick cooking veggies you want (corn, zucchini, onions, peppers, etc) and chili powder, salt and hot pepper to taste. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat till done. In place of the spices, you can also use a package of Fantastic Foods Vegetarian Chili Mix (contains soy TVP) plus 2 1/2 cups (600 ml) of water.

**Chili from scratch** - Soak beans the night before and cook with chili powder and hot pepper plus any other spices, herbs and salt to taste. Add veggies and simmer for up to one hour.

## Simple Black Bean Soup

SERVES 2, <30 MINUTES

|  |  |
|--|--|
| 1/2 Tbsp olive oil                             | 1 (15 oz / 425 g) cans black beans*                |
| 1/2 medium onion, chopped                      | 1 1/2 cups (360 ml) water (or soup broth or stock) |
| 1/2 Tbsp ground cumin                          | Salt and pepper to taste                           |
| 1 clove garlic (optional)                      | 2 Tbsp cilantro, chopped                           |
| 1/2 small red or green chili pepper (optional) |  |

**Sauté onion** in olive oil in the bottom of a pot. Add a splash of water if too dry. When onion becomes translucent, add cumin, garlic, if using, and cook for one minute.

**Add chili pepper** to taste (some chilies are hotter than others).

**Add black beans** and water (or vegetarian broth) and bring to a simmer, stirring occasionally. Cook for 15 minutes.

**For a smooth soup**, use a hand blender to blend the ingredients in the pot, or transfer to a blender.

**Serve** with a garnish of cilantro.

\* **Note:** you can also use dry black beans. Sort through 3/4 cups (150 g) of beans for any rocks, soak overnight, rinse, then bring to a boil with enough water to cover and simmer for up to one hour until very soft. Hand blending them part way through will speed things up.  
**Note:** if your beans are old they may take longer to get soft.

## Basic Miso Soup

SERVES 2, <20 MINUTES

|   |  |
|---|--|
| 2 cups (480 ml) water                       | 1/2 sheet dried nori seaweed, cut into strips (optional) |
| 1/4 cup (60 g) cubed tofu                   | 1/4 cup (60 g) miso                                      |
| 1/2 carrot, cut into matchsticks (optional) | 1 green onion, sliced                                    |

**Pour** the water into a pot and bring to a boil. Lower heat and add the tofu and carrots. Simmer for 2 minutes.

**Turn off** heat and add the miso to the pot and stir well. Top with green onion and nori and serve immediately.

**Variations:** Add greens, mushrooms or noodles.

## Veggie Chili

6-8 SERVINGS, <50 MINUTES

|   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 Tbsp olive oil                                | 3 cloves garlic, diced or crushed                            |
| 1 onion, chopped                                | 2 (28 oz / 800 g) cans whole tomatoes                        |
| 2 bay leaves                                    | 1/4 cup (30 g) chili powder                                  |
| 2 tsp ground cumin                              | 2 tsp ground black pepper                                    |
| 1 Tbsp dried oregano                            | 3 (15 oz / 425 g) cans beans such as kidney, pinto, or black |
| 2 tsp salt or to taste                          | 2 cups (300 g) corn kernels, fresh or frozen                 |
| 2 zucchinis, chopped                            |  |
| 2 green peppers, chopped                        |  |
| 1-2 jalapeño hot peppers, de-seeded and chopped |  |

**Heat** the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Stir in the onion, and season with bay leaves, cumin, oregano and salt.

**Cook** and stir until onion is tender, then mix in the zucchini, green peppers, jalapeño peppers and garlic. Reduce heat to low, cover pot and simmer 5 minutes.

**Mix** the tomatoes into the pot.

**Season** with chili powder and pepper.

**Stir in** the beans. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to low and simmer 30 minutes.

**Stir in** the corn, and continue cooking 5 min. before serving.

**Tips:** Taste how hot the jalapeño pepper is before deciding how much to use. The heat level can vary quite a bit, and some may have no heat at all. • For a “meatier” chili, throw in a package of ‘ground’ veggie meat.

**Reduce cost:** Sort and soak dry beans the night before instead of using canned beans. Increase cooking time by 10-15 minutes to allow beans to soften completely.