

COOK ONCE

Eat All Week!



A Mix-and-Match, Plant-Based Meal Prep Plan

By Heather Reseck, RDN

Meal prep is the process of planning and preparing food in advance. Some call it batch cooking. For others, meal prep is prepackaging multiple containers of the same meal to eat throughout the week.

I like to think of meal prep as cooking forward—make-ahead, whole-food, plant-based staples that provide the building blocks of healthy meals. Heat-and-eat meal components such as beans, brown rice, roasted vegetables, and flavorful sauces make it possible to create quick, homemade meals. These meal components are ready to mix and match, allowing flexibility and creativity.

And those quick meals check all of the boxes:

- tasty
- healthy
- fast



5 Great Reasons to Meal Prep

1 | YOU'LL SAVE TIME.

You'll spend less time during the week cooking and cleaning up. Plus, you won't be standing in front of the open refrigerator wondering what to cook.

2 | YOU'LL SAVE MONEY.

Having a plan means fewer trips to the store and fewer impulse purchases. You'll also be more intentional about using the food you buy and much less likely to let it rot in the back of the refrigerator. Plus, you won't be dependent on buying more expensive processed and packaged food.

3 | YOU'LL EXPERIENCE LESS STRESS.

You'll be able to say goodbye to the "what's for dinner?" stress and decision fatigue about what to eat.

4 | YOU'LL BE BETTER NOURISHED.

When you plan your food, you make better food choices. You'll find it easier to eat more veggies, beans, and whole grains.

5 | YOU'LL IMPROVE YOUR COOKING SKILLS.

As you meal prep, you'll learn valuable cooking skills along the way, and you'll get faster and more efficient the more you do it.

A Mostly Mediterranean Meal Prep Plan



Each of the 11 mix-and-match meal components adds something special to these Mediterranean-inspired meals. The recipes center around **white beans** and **chickpeas**. **Roasted tomatoes** have an intense flavor and reduced moisture content, making them easier to add to wraps. **Almond Feta** makes it possible to enjoy a dairy-free Greek salad. **Walnut Pesto** and **Lemon Vinaigrette** add complementary flavors. **Roasted cauliflower, chopped fresh vegetables, brown rice, baby potatoes, and Tofu Scramble** round out the buffet of options for creating a variety of delicious combinations.

How Meal Prep Improves Nutrition

(IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK)

Besides making healthy meals faster and easier, cooking and cooling certain foods ahead offers the nutritional benefit of higher levels of resistant starch.

Similar to fiber, resistant starch resists digestion in the small intestine.

That means it doesn't impact blood sugar levels.

Resistant starch feeds the friendly bacteria in the large intestine, so it acts as a prebiotic.

Additional benefits of resistant starch include:

✓	increased feeling of fullness
✓	lower cholesterol
✓	less constipation
✓	lower risk of colon cancer
✓	slower fermentation in the gut = less gas

Beans contain the most resistant starch. White beans are one of the highest. Other sources include whole grains, most notably oats and rice, plus potatoes, sweet potatoes, and even pasta.

The bottom line: Meal prep beans, potatoes, sweet potatoes, and whole grains to increase the amount of resistant starch they contain. Reheating does not reduce the resistant starch.



What Restaurants Can Teach Us About Meal Prep

Restaurants wouldn't survive if they prepared meals the way we do at home—without planning and advance preparation.

Before the dinner rush, the chefs and prep cooks chop onions, partially cook rice and potatoes, and make sauces. That's what enables them to quickly prepare the food when diners order meals.

Imagine how quickly you could get meals on the table if you had the planning and advance preparation done.

That's what meal prep is all about—setting yourself up for healthy meals in a hurry.

Tips for Meal Prep Planning

DOUBLE UP.

If you are serving more than two people, double the recipes and add extra meal components later in the week.

► Start with a focus on produce.

What vegetables and fruits do you have on hand that need to be used? What seasonal produce is available?

► Incorporate leftovers.

What leftovers or “planned-overs” do you need to use within the next week?

► Include the freezer and pantry.

What foods do you have in the freezer or pantry that would complement what you need to use?

► Plan additional meal components to complement what you have available.

Consider these categories of meal components in your planning:

- ◆ Beans, chili, tofu, or tempeh
- ◆ Soup or stew
- ◆ Grains and bread
- ◆ Seasonal and frozen vegetables and fruits
- ◆ Greens (cooked and raw)
- ◆ Salads
- ◆ Sauces and condiments
- ◆ Nuts and seeds
- ◆ Breakfast

► Keep it simple.

Take advantage of one-dish meals. Minimize the use of recipes for putting the meals together.

► Plan easy meals for the day of your meal prep cooking session.

► Plan meal components that do double or triple duty.

Make things that can be used in at least two or three ways. Or choose components such as seasoning mixes that will keep for several months so you can use them over time.

GROCERY LIST (for 2 people)

You'll likely have some of these items in your kitchen already. Put a check by the things you'll need to add to your shopping list.

PRODUCE

- 2 pounds red and/or yellow baby potatoes
- 1 medium red onion
- 1 bulb garlic
- 8 large tomatoes
- 1 medium head cauliflower
- 1–2 (5-ounce) packages baby greens mix: kale, chard, and spinach
- 1 head romaine lettuce
- 1 large red bell pepper
- 1 large bell pepper—any color
- 1 English cucumber
- 1–2 bunches fresh basil (3–4 ounces)
- 1 bunch parsley
- 1 package chives
- 6 medium lemons
- 1 ripe avocado

REFRIGERATED

- 1 (14–16-ounce) package soft or firm water-packed tofu
- Nondairy cheese*

PACKAGED FOODS

- Kalamata olives
- Green olives*
- 8 ounces pasta
- Salsa

BEANS

- 1 pound dried great northern beans (or 4 15-ounce cans)
- 1 (15-ounce) can chickpeas

WHOLE GRAINS

- 2–3 cups brown rice

NUTS AND SEEDS

- 1 cup whole raw (or blanched) almonds
- 1 cup walnuts
- Sunflower seeds*

BREADS

- Whole-grain baguette
- Flour tortillas and/or pita bread

SPECIALTY

- Black salt* (kala namak—available at Indian markets and online)

KITCHEN STAPLES

- Salt
- Chicken-style seasoning
- Onion powder
- Garlic powder
- Paprika
- Ground turmeric
- Dried rosemary
- Nutritional yeast flakes
- Extra-virgin olive oil
- Refined coconut oil
- Honey
- Parchment paper

*Optional

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MIX-AND-MATCH MEALS

Combine the meal prep components with a few extra ingredients from your fridge or pantry to create fresh and fun meal ideas.



11 MIX-AND-MATCH MEAL COMPONENTS

- **White beans** (page 7)
- **Chickpeas**
- **Baby potatoes** (page 8)
- **Brown rice** (page 9)
- **Roasted cauliflower** (page 9)
- **Roasted tomatoes** (page 10)
- **Almond Feta** (page 10)
- **Lemon Vinaigrette** (page 11)
- **Walnut Pesto** (page 12)
- **Tofu Scramble** (page 13)
- **Chopped fresh vegetables**

Pasta with White Beans and Pesto

white beans + roasted tomatoes + Walnut Pesto + pasta + salad

1. In serving bowl, combine white beans, chopped roasted tomatoes, and pesto.
2. Cook pasta according to package directions. Drain and add to bowl. Let stand 5 minutes. Toss until pasta is evenly coated.
3. Serve with Greek Salad (page 11) or baby greens and Lemon Vinaigrette.

White Bean Soup with Lemon Herb Potato Salad and Pesto Crostini

white beans + baby potatoes + Lemon Vinaigrette + baguette + Walnut Pesto + roasted tomatoes + Almond Feta

1. Simmer white beans with minced garlic and rosemary. Thin with water as desired.
2. Toss cooked baby potatoes with Lemon Vinaigrette, lemon zest, and chopped fresh parsley and chives.
3. Toast whole-grain baguette slices. Spread with pesto. Top with chopped roasted tomatoes. Sprinkle with crumbled Almond Feta.

Tofu Scramble and Roasted Potatoes

tofu + Tofu Scramble Seasoning Mix + chopped vegetables + Next-Day Roasted Potatoes

Mediterranean Veggie Power Bowl

baby greens + brown rice + chickpeas + veggies + Almond Feta + Lemon Vinaigrette

Layer in large bowl: baby greens mix (kale, chard, and spinach), brown rice, chickpeas, roasted tomatoes, roasted cauliflower, olives, chopped bell pepper and cucumber, and Almond Feta. Drizzle with Lemon Vinaigrette. Sprinkle with chopped walnuts or sunflower seeds.

Breakfast (or Lunch) Burrito

tortilla + Tofu Scramble + roasted potatoes + roasted tomatoes + avocado

Layer warmed flour tortilla with leftover Tofu Scramble, roasted potatoes, baby greens, roasted tomatoes, and avocado slices. If desired, sprinkle with nondairy cheese. Roll up. Serve with salsa for dipping.

Greek Chopped Salad

lettuce + chopped vegetables + chickpeas + Almond Feta + Lemon Vinaigrette

Toss chopped romaine, chopped bell pepper, chopped tomatoes, chopped cucumber, kalamata olives, sliced red onion, chickpeas, crumbled Almond Feta, dried oregano, and Lemon Vinaigrette together.

Mediterranean Veggie Wrap

tortilla or pita bread + Walnut Pesto + white beans or chickpeas + roasted tomatoes + roasted cauliflower + Almond Feta

Spread warmed flour tortilla or pita bread with pesto. Layer with drained white beans or chickpeas, roasted tomatoes, roasted cauliflower, baby greens, olives, and Almond Feta. Roll up.

Prep Steps for Meal Make Ahead Day

The meal components can be made in a pressure cooker, slow cooker, or stovetop/oven—so do what is easiest for you. If you have all three options available, here are some suggestions for how to use all three at the same time so you shorten your time in the kitchen:

- ◆ **White beans** (slow cooker)
- ◆ **Brown rice** (pressure cooker)
- ◆ **Baby potatoes** (pressure cooker)
- ◆ **Roasted cauliflower** (oven)
- ◆ **Roasted tomatoes** (oven)
- ◆ **Almond feta** (oven)

EARLY IN THE DAY



SLOW COOKER

Quick soak and cook the white beans.

1. Place 2½ cups (1 pound) great northern beans in a 3½–4-quart slow cooker. (May be doubled in a 6–8-quart slow cooker.) Pour in boiling water to cover by about 1½ inches. Stir in 2 teaspoons of salt. Cover and let stand 1 hour.
2. Drain and rinse. Rinse slow cooker. Make sure outside of crock is dry.
3. Return beans to slow cooker. Stir in 2 teaspoons salt and water to cover by 1 inch. Cover and cook until beans are soft, on high for 4–5 hours, or on low for 8–9 hours.

START THE MEAL PREP SESSION



OVEN

Preheat.

Heat the oven to 400°F.



PRESSURE COOKER

Cook the potatoes.

1. Place 2 pounds baby potatoes on trivet or in steamer basket. Add 1 cup water.
2. Pressure cook for 3 minutes.
3. Quick release the pressure.
4. Transfer to 9 x 13-inch baking dish to cool.



OVEN

Prep and roast the tomatoes and cauliflower.

1. Cut tomatoes into ½-inch slices and place cut-side up on parchment-lined rimmed baking sheet. Sprinkle with salt. Place in oven, even if it's not up to temperature.
2. Cut cauliflower into ¼-inch slices and arrange in single layer on rimmed baking sheet. Sprinkle with salt.
3. Roast cauliflower until tender and lightly browned on edges and bottom, about 20–25 minutes.
4. REDUCE OVEN TEMPERATURE TO 250°F.



BLENDER

Make the Almond Feta.

1. Process ingredients together until smooth, adding as little water as possible.
2. Transfer to parchment-lined 8 x 8-inch baking dish.
3. Do not rinse blender.



OVEN

Bake the Almond Feta and tomatoes.

1. Place Almond Feta in oven and bake for 30–45 minutes, until firm on top and it does not stick to your finger.
2. Continue baking tomatoes until most liquid has evaporated and they have shrunk to less than ¼-inch thick, about 30–60 minutes.

(continued on page 6)



PRESSURE COOKER

Cook the rice.

1. In pressure cooker, stir together 2 cups rinsed brown rice, 2–2¼ cups water, and a scant 1 teaspoon salt. (For 3 cups rice, use 3 to 3 ⅓ cups water, and a scant 1½ teaspoon salt.)
2. Pressure cook for 24–26 minutes.
3. Let pressure release naturally for 15 minutes. Quick-release any remaining pressure.
4. Fluff rice with fork.
5. Transfer to storage containers, uncovered, to cool.



BLENDER

Make the Lemon Vinaigrette.

1. Blend ingredients together in same blender jar that Almond Feta was made in. The residual Almond Feta mixture will help thicken the dressing.
2. Pour into small jar. Cover and refrigerate.



FOOD PROCESSOR

Make the Walnut Pesto.

1. Process ingredients in food processor.
2. Transfer to small container or jar. Cover and refrigerate.



KNIFE

Prep the Greek Salad.

1. Thinly slice half of the red onion.
2. Cut cucumber into ½-inch pieces.
3. Cut bell pepper into ½-inch pieces.
4. Place in separate containers or make mason jar Greek salads. Cover and refrigerate.



KNIFE

Prep any other vegetables.

1. Chop remainder of onion, bell pepper, and any other vegetables you want for salads or cooking—carrots, celery, zucchini, etc.
2. Place in separate storage containers. Cover and refrigerate.



SEASONING MIX PREP

Make Tofu Scramble Seasoning Mix.

1. Place ingredients in small jar with lid. Stir or shake until mixed.
2. Label jar with name and instructions: “Use 3–4 teaspoons per block of tofu.”
3. Store in cupboard.



REFRIGERATE

When the hot foods have cooled to room temperature.

Transfer all foods to separate containers. Cover and refrigerate.

CLEAN UP AND RELAX

1. Load dishwasher or hand wash dishes.
2. Put your feet up and relax, knowing you now have meal components for all week!



Pressure-Cooked White Beans

The delicate flavor of white beans makes them versatile. Great northern beans hold their shape better than navy beans. Cannellini beans are larger, harder to find, and more expensive. All three types of white beans can be used interchangeably. The cooking times will vary slightly.

Makes 6 cups

2½ cups great northern beans, sorted and rinsed (1 pound)

water

4 teaspoons salt, divided

1. Place beans in 6-quart electric pressure cooker. Pour in water to cover by 1½ inches. Stir in 2 teaspoons of salt.
2. Secure lid and close pressure release valve. Select the Pressure Cook/Manual setting and set it for 0 minutes. (That's not a typo!)
3. When the time is completed, allow the pressure to release naturally for 30 minutes.
4. Remove lid. Remove one bean and slice it crosswise with a paring knife. If it looks the same throughout, it is rehydrated. If an opaque spot remains in the center, let beans soak longer, or add 1–5 minutes to the cooking time.
5. Drain beans in colander and rinse. Rinse pressure cooker inner pot and make sure the outside is dry; return to the pressure cooker base.
6. Add beans, 2 teaspoons salt, and water to cover by a scant inch. Secure lid and close pressure release valve. Select Pressure Cook/Manual setting and set it for 5 minutes.
7. When cooking is completed, allow pressure to release naturally for 15 minutes. Release any remaining pressure. Carefully remove lid. Check beans to make sure they are soft. If not, simmer using the Sauté setting until done. Or pressure cook another 1–2 minutes.
8. Pour into storage container. Cool, uncovered, to room temperature. Cover and refrigerate for up to 1 week. Or freeze up to 6 months.

CHEF'S TIPS

▶ Use your finger to estimate the water to cover the beans (except when using boiling water). Up to the first knuckle of your index finger is approximately one inch.

▶ The hot water quick-soak reduces the gas-producing properties. Beans cook more evenly and hold their shape better when soaked in salt water. Plus, the flavor improves when cooked with salt.

▶ A variety of factors impact the pressure cooking times for beans, including the age of the beans. Since pressure-cooked beans can't be tested for doneness during cooking, expect to experiment with the cooking times.

▶ Freeze any extra white beans in 1½ cup portions, which can substitute for 1 (15-ounce) can of white beans.

DON'T HAVE A PRESSURE COOKER?

Cook beans on the stovetop or in a slow cooker instead.

Stovetop White Beans

1. Place beans in large saucepan. Pour in water to cover by 1½ inches. Stir in 2 teaspoons salt. Heat to boiling over high heat. Remove from heat. Cover and let stand 1 hour.
2. Drain and rinse. Rinse saucepan. Add beans, 2 teaspoons salt, and water to cover by 1 inch. Heat to boiling. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer until beans are soft, about 1½ hours.

Slow-Cooked White Beans

1. Place beans in a 3½- to 6-quart slow cooker. Pour in boiling water to cover by 1½ inches. Stir in 2 teaspoons salt. Cover and let stand 1 hour.
2. Drain and rinse. Rinse slow cooker. Add beans, 2 teaspoons salt, and water to cover by 1 inch. Cover and cook until beans are soft: On high for 4–5 hours, or on low for 8–9 hours.

SERVING IDEAS

- * **Simple White Bean Soup:** Sauté chopped onion and garlic. Add beans and a sprig or two of rosemary. Simmer for 10–15 minutes. Add chopped tomatoes and greens. Simmer until heated through and greens have wilted.
- * **Beans and Greens:** Add cooked kale and garlic.
- * **White Bean-Pesto Dip:** Mash drained white beans and pesto together. Spread on bread, or serve as a dip with vegetables or crackers.
- * Drain and serve with pasta, pesto, olives, and roasted tomatoes.
- * Add to salads or bowl meals.
- * Serve over rice.

Pressure-Cooked Baby Potatoes

With precooked potatoes on hand, you can quickly make roasted potatoes, hash, or potato salad. Nutrition improves since the cooked potatoes produce resistant starch when cooled. Resistant starch feeds the friendly bacteria in the colon and reduces the impact on blood sugar levels even after the potatoes are reheated.

Makes about 6 cups

1 cup water

2 pounds red and/or yellow baby potatoes, scrubbed

1. Pour water into electric pressure cooker. Place steamer basket inside pressure cooker.
2. Cut any potatoes that are larger than 1–1¼ inches. Leave smaller ones whole.
3. Place potatoes in steamer basket.
4. Secure lid and close pressure release valve. Select Pressure Cook/Manual setting and set for 1 minute for slightly undercooked potatoes; 2 minutes for fully cooked potatoes.
5. When cooking is completed, quick-release the pressure. Carefully remove lid.
6. Use hot pads to lift steamer out. Or use tongs to remove potatoes.
7. Transfer potatoes to 9 x 13-inch baking dish and spread them into a single layer.
8. Let cool. Cover and refrigerate.

CHEF'S TIPS

► For even cooking, potatoes should be close to the same size. Cut any larger potatoes into 1–1¼ inches pieces.

► If you plan to roast the potatoes at a later meal, it's best for potatoes to be slightly undercooked. The potatoes will continue to cook slightly after being removed from heat.

► Steamer baskets made for electric pressure cookers will have handles which makes them easier to retrieve from a deep pot. If you use a traditional collapsible steamer basket, you may want to use tongs to remove the potatoes from the pressure cooker.

VARIATION

■ **Stovetop Potatoes:** Place potatoes in medium saucepan. Cover with water. Heat to a boil over high heat. Cover, reduce heat and simmer until potatoes are tender when poked with a fork, about 10–15 minutes.

SERVING IDEAS

- * **Herb-Roasted Potatoes:** Toss potatoes with 2 tablespoons of any combination of chopped fresh rosemary, thyme, marjoram, savory, and sage. Or use 2 teaspoons of dried herbs. After roasting, toss with 2–3 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley and/or chives. If desired, toss with 2 tablespoons lemon juice.
- * **Skillet Potatoes:** Cook potatoes in a single layer in a large skillet over medium heat until brown, turning as needed. Add oil if desired. Sprinkle with salt and seasonings of choice.
- * **Lemon and Herb Potato Salad:** Toss cooked potatoes with Lemon Vinaigrette (p. 11), lemon zest, chopped fresh parsley, chives, and salt.
- * **Red Potato Salad:** Toss warm potatoes with lemon juice. Combine chopped red potatoes, vegan mayonnaise, chopped pickles, chopped green onions, chopped fresh parsley, and salt.

Next-Day Roasted Potatoes

The amounts listed here are guidelines. Feel free to sprinkle the seasonings without measuring or create your own combination.

3 cups precooked baby potatoes (½ recipe at left)

1½ teaspoons olive oil

½ teaspoon onion powder

¼ teaspoon garlic powder

¼ teaspoon paprika

¼ teaspoon salt

⅛ teaspoon minced rosemary

1. Heat oven to 400°F.
2. Cut whole potatoes in half. Toss potatoes with oil on rimmed baking sheet. Sprinkle with seasonings, and toss again until evenly coated. Arrange cut-size down in single layer.
3. Bake until browned and crispy on bottom, about 25–30 minutes.

CHEF'S TIP

► The roasting temperature can be flexible, anywhere between 350° and 400°F. This is helpful if you need to bake something else at the same time.

Pressure-Cooked Brown Rice

This simple, no-fuss recipe showcases the simplicity of pressure cooking. Once you learn the basics, you'll discover that an electric pressure cooker is not as complicated as it looks and is less hands-on than traditional stovetop cooking.

Makes 6 cups

2 cups long-grain brown rice

2 cups water

scant 1 teaspoon salt

1. Rinse rice in fine-mesh strainer; drain thoroughly.
2. In pressure cooker, stir together all ingredients.
3. Secure lid and move the pressure release valve to the sealed position. Select Pressure Cook/Manual setting and set it for 24–26 minutes.
4. When cooking is completed, let the pressure release naturally for 15 minutes. Quick-release any remaining pressure. Carefully remove lid. Fluff with fork.
5. Cover and refrigerate for up to 1 week. Or freeze for up to 6 months.

CHEF'S TIPS

- ▶ Adjust ratio of rice to water to suit your preferences. Some people prefer slightly more water than a 1:1 ratio for pressure cooking.
- ▶ If rice is too dry, increase cooking time by two minutes and/or increase water by 2 tablespoons per cup of rice.
- ▶ To reheat rice in pressure cooker: Place trivet and 1 cup water in pressure cooker. Place cooked rice in uncovered heat-proof container and place on top of trivet. Secure lid and close the pressure release valve. Select Steam and set for 5 minutes. Quick-release the pressure.
- ▶ Freeze any extra brown rice in 1- to 3-cup portions.

VARIATION

■ **Stovetop Brown Rice:** In medium saucepan over high heat, heat 4 cups water and salt to boil. Stir in rice. Reduce heat to medium low, cover, and simmer 45–50 minutes, until rice is tender and liquid is absorbed. Remove from heat. Let stand 10 minutes. Fluff with fork.



Roasted Cauliflower

Roasted cauliflower is simply delicious and easy to prepare. Roasting enhances the flavor. No oil necessary!

Makes 4 to 6 servings.

1 medium head cauliflower

salt, to taste

1. Heat oven to 400°F.
2. Remove leaves from cauliflower. Cut off lower part of stem so it's even with bottom florets. Place stem-side down on cutting board. Cut cauliflower into ¼-inch slices.
3. Place in single layer on rimmed baking sheet. Sprinkle with salt, to taste.
4. Roast until cauliflower is tender and lightly browned on edges and bottom, about 20–25 minutes.

VARIATION

■ Toss with 1–2 teaspoons olive oil after baking.

SERVING IDEAS

- * Serve as a side dish.
- * Add to salads, veggie power bowls, or wraps.

Roasted Tomatoes

Roasting concentrates the flavor of tomatoes. Their savory sweetness can punch up the flavor of a variety of dishes. Although this works best with in-season, vine-ripened tomatoes, roasting even improves winter tomatoes.

Makes 8 servings.

4 large tomatoes

1. Heat oven to 400°F. Line rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Remove core from tomatoes, and cut crosswise into ½-inch slices. Arrange in a single layer on baking sheet. Sprinkle with salt.
3. Bake for 30 minutes, until starting to brown.
4. Reduce oven temperature to 250°–300°F.
5. Bake until most of liquid has evaporated and tomatoes have shrunk to less than ¼-inch thick, about 30–60 minutes.
6. Let cool on baking sheet about 15 minutes.
7. Refrigerate in covered container for up to 1 week. Or freeze for up to 6 months.

VARIATIONS

- Substitute Roma tomatoes. They will bake faster since they contain less moisture.
- Substitute halved grape or cherry tomatoes.
- Add garlic, onion, oregano, or thyme.

SERVING IDEAS

- * Add to sandwiches or wraps.
- * Top pizza, crostini, or bruschetta.
- * Serve on top of soft polenta, along with garlicky greens, Almond Feta, or vegan parmesan.
- * Stir into scrambled tofu.
- * Toss with pasta and fresh basil.
- * Add to a veggie power bowl.
- * Add to white bean or vegetable soup.
- * Blend to make roasted tomato soup.
- * Make into salsa.

Almond Feta

This creamy, tangy, and salty plant-based version of feta means you can enjoy dairy-free Greek salad.

Makes 1½ cups

1 cup whole almonds
water

3 tablespoons lemon juice

2 tablespoons green olive brine or water

2 tablespoons refined coconut oil

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 teaspoon salt

1. Heat oven to 250°F.
2. Place almonds in small saucepan and cover with water. On stovetop, bring to a boil over high heat. Remove from heat and let stand 5 minutes. Drain and rinse with cold water.
3. Remove the skins of the almonds by holding each almond between your thumb and forefinger and pinching the skin. Discard skins.
4. In blender, process almonds, ¼ cup water, lemon juice, olive brine, coconut oil, olive oil, and salt. Stop to scrape sides of blender as needed. Add additional 1 tablespoon of water, if needed, for blending. Continue blending until smooth, thick mixture is formed, similar to hummus.
5. Line 8-inch square baking pan with oversize piece of parchment paper. Spread mixture evenly in pan.
6. Bake for 30–45 minutes, or until middle is firm to the touch and does not stick to your finger.
7. Use excess parchment paper on sides of the pan as handles to transfer Almond Feta to a cooling rack. Let cool completely.
8. Keeping pieces as large as possible, flip cooled Almond Feta. Make sure both sides are dry before placing it in a storage container. Refrigerate and use within 10–14 days, or freeze up to 3 months.

CHEF'S TIPS

- ▶ To save time, buy blanched almonds and skip step 3.
- ▶ Use least amount of water in order to keep the mixture as thick as possible.

SERVING IDEAS

- * Add to salads, pizza, pasta, or wraps.
- * Spread on bread or toasted baguette slices.

Greek Salad with Almond Feta

This salad is such a tasty way to enjoy vegetables, accented with briny kalamata olives and creamy Almond Feta.

Makes 6–8 servings

½ medium red onion, thinly sliced

1 large bell pepper—any color, stemmed, seeded, and cut into ½-inch pieces

1 English cucumber, cut into ½-inch pieces

4 large tomatoes, cored, cut into 1-inch pieces*

1 cup pitted kalamata olives

4–6 tablespoons Lemon Vinaigrette, to taste (recipe at right)

1 teaspoon dried oregano, crushed between fingers

1 cup Almond Feta, crumbled (see recipe on page 10)
salt, to taste

1. Place the onion, bell pepper, and cucumber in separate storage containers. Or stir onion, bell pepper, and cucumber together in one container. Cover and refrigerate for up to 3 days.
2. When ready to serve, transfer the desired amount of vegetables to a bowl. No need to measure—use the amounts that look right. Add the desired amount of kalamata olives, chopped tomatoes, Almond Feta, Lemon Vinaigrette, and oregano. Toss together. Season to taste with salt.

CHEF'S TIP

► To tame the pungent flavor of raw onion, toss slices with 1 tablespoon lemon juice or soak in cold water for 10–15 minutes. Drain.

* Substitute 2½–3 cups halved cherry or grape tomatoes when slicing tomatoes are not in season.

SERVING IDEA

* **Mason Jar Greek Salad:** Layer in the following order in a pint or quart mason jar: dressing, onion, tomato, bell pepper, cucumber, kalamata olives, feta, oregano. For a more substantial salad, add chickpeas near the bottom, and add brown rice or quinoa. To serve, empty contents of jar into a bowl. Stir to mix. Serve with additional dressing if desired. Use within 3 days.



Lemon Vinaigrette

This bright and versatile dressing pairs well with Mediterranean flavors, late summer produce, and a variety of salads.

Makes approximately 1 cup

½ cup lemon juice

½ cup extra-virgin olive oil

1 garlic clove, pressed or minced

2 teaspoons honey

½ teaspoon salt

1. In blender, process olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, honey, and salt until thoroughly blended and smooth.
2. Pour into jar or salad dressing container. Cover.
3. Refrigerate for up to 2 weeks. Shake before serving.

Walnut Pesto

Pesto is a tasty way to enjoy fresh herbs and greens. Freeze pesto for fresh summer flavor all winter long. Frozen cubes thaw quickly for an easy flavor booster.

Makes about 1 cup

2 cups tightly packed fresh basil leaves

1 cup walnuts

1 packed cup spinach or baby greens mix
(kale, chard, and spinach)

2-4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

2 cloves garlic, minced

1 tablespoon + 1 teaspoon lemon juice

2 teaspoons nutritional yeast flakes

scant ½ teaspoon salt

1. In food processor, process all ingredients until finely ground. Stop and scrape down sides with spatula, as needed.
2. Transfer to smallest container possible to reduce oxidation. Refrigerate for up to 7 days. Freeze up to 6 months.

CHEF'S TIPS

- ▶ The amount of basil to buy is about 3-4 ounces.
- ▶ If desired, reserve a few leaves basil for garnish.
- ▶ Make a double or quadruple recipe and freeze in 1-tablespoon portions in an ice cube tray. After the pesto is frozen, transfer the cubes to a freezer container. Freeze up to 6 months.
- ▶ Store fresh basil in a jar of water on the counter, as you would fresh flowers. Cover with a plastic bag to keep the moisture in. Use within three days of purchasing.



SERVING IDEAS

- * Toss with pasta—thin as desired with a small amount of water or hot pasta cooking water. Add roasted red peppers and olives.
- * Thin and serve as a dip for fresh vegetables.
- * Toss with zucchini “noodles”—raw or cooked.
- * Spread on a sandwich with tomato, avocado, and arugula.
- * Stir into vegan mayonnaise to make a salad dressing.
- * Stir into vegetable soup or minestrone just before serving.
- * Toss with roasted vegetables or boiled potatoes.
- * Toss with roasted cauliflower, olives, and white beans.
- * Top a baked potato.
- * Stir into white beans.
- * Mash with white beans for a spread.
- * Spread on bread, crostini, or pizza.

Tofu Scramble Seasoning Mix

Keep this seasoning mix on hand for those times when you need a quick meal.

Makes a scant $\frac{1}{3}$ cup; seasons about 4 pounds tofu

2 tablespoons chicken-style seasoning

2 tablespoons nutritional yeast flakes

1½ teaspoons onion powder

$\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon garlic powder

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground turmeric

1. Stir all ingredients together. Or shake together in a small jar with a lid.
2. Label with name and directions: “Use 3–4 teaspoons per block of tofu.”
3. Store in airtight container in cool, dry place for up to 6 months.

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Tofu Scramble

One of the fastest high-protein dishes you'll ever make. It's not just a breakfast food: Enjoy it for any meal of the day.

Makes 4 servings

1 (14–16-ounce) package soft or firm water-packed tofu, drained

3–4 teaspoons Tofu Scramble Seasoning Mix, to taste

black salt (kala namak), optional

chopped basil or chives, for garnish, optional

1. Wrap tofu in kitchen towel or several layers of paper towels and press gently to remove excess water.
2. Heat skillet over medium heat. Crumble tofu into skillet. Sprinkle with Tofu Scramble Seasoning Mix and stir until mixed. Cook, stirring frequently, until heated through and excess water has evaporated.
3. If desired, sprinkle with black salt, and garnish with basil or chives.

CHEF'S TIPS

▶ The black salt (kala namak) has a high sulfur content and gives the tofu an eggy aroma and taste. It is available at Indian markets and online.

▶ For additional flavor and nutrients, add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup drained black beans, or sauté chopped onions, bell peppers, garlic, or mushrooms until soft before adding tofu.

▶ Mix leftovers with mayonnaise for an instant sandwich spread.

Heather Reseck, RDN, helps people eat healthier while saving time in the kitchen. She teaches plant-based meal prep in a variety of ways. Her website is www.HeatherReseck.com.