Weeknight Kitchen

A Small Cookbook

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Weeknight Tomato and Lentil Soup

Serves: 4
Makes: 1.5 litres
Prep: 10 min
Cook: 35 min

A storecupboard soup that comes together in one pot. Red lentils need no soaking and break down into a thick, warming base.

- Olive oil 2 tbsp
- Onion, diced (1)
- Carrots, diced (2)
- Garlic cloves, minced (2)
- Ground cumin 2 tsp
- Red lentils 200 g
- Chopped tomatoes (tin) 400 g
- Vegetable stock 1 ℓ
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Lemon juice 1 tbsp

1 Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the onion and carrots and cook for 5 minutes, until the onion softens.

2 Add the garlic and cumin and cook for 1 minute, stirring, until fragrant.

3 Stir in the lentils, chopped tomatoes and stock. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer.

4 Cover and cook for 25–30 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the lentils have broken down and the soup has thickened.

5 Season with salt and pepper, stir in the lemon juice, and serve hot with crusty bread.

Hint: For a smoother soup, blend half of it with a stick blender before serving and stir it back into the pot.

Pan-Seared Salmon with Lemon Butter

Serves: 2
Makes: 2 fillets
Prep: 5 min
Cook: 12 min

Crisp-skinned salmon in a quick pan sauce. Works equally well with trout or a firm white fish.

- Salmon fillets, skin on (2)
- Salt and pepper
- Olive oil 1 tbsp
- Butter 30 g
- Garlic clove, sliced (1)
- Lemon juice 1 tbsp
- Fresh dill, chopped 1 tbsp

1 Pat the salmon fillets dry and season both sides with salt and pepper.

2 Heat the olive oil in a frying pan over medium-high heat. Lay the salmon skin-side down and press gently for the first 30 seconds so the skin stays flat.

3 Cook for 4–5 minutes, until the skin is crisp and golden, then flip and cook for a further 2–3 minutes.

4 Reduce the heat, add the butter and garlic to the pan, and baste the salmon with the melted butter for 1 minute.

5 Remove from the heat, stir the lemon juice into the pan butter, and spoon it over the fillets. Scatter with dill and serve immediately.

Hint: Let the salmon come to room temperature for 10 minutes before cooking so it sears evenly.

Brown Butter Chocolate Chip Cookies

Serves: 12
Makes: 12 cookies
Prep: 15 min
Cook: 12 min

Browning the butter first adds a nutty, toffee-like depth that plain melted butter can’t match.

- Unsalted butter 115 g
- Light brown sugar 150 g
- Granulated sugar 50 g
- Egg (1)
- Vanilla extract 1 tsp
- Plain flour 190 g
- Bicarbonate of soda 0.5 tsp
- Salt 0.5 tsp
- Dark chocolate chips 150 g

1 Melt the butter in a light-coloured saucepan over medium heat, swirling often, until it turns golden brown and smells nutty, about 5 minutes. Pour into a bowl and let cool for 10 minutes.

2 Whisk the brown sugar and granulated sugar into the cooled brown butter until smooth. Whisk in the egg and vanilla.

3 Fold in the flour, bicarbonate of soda and salt until just combined, then fold in the chocolate chips.

4 Chill the dough for at least 30 minutes. Preheat the oven to 190°C (170°C fan).

5 Scoop 12 balls of dough onto a lined baking tray, spaced well apart, and bake for 11–13 minutes until the edges are golden but the centres still look slightly underdone.

6 Cool on the tray for 5 minutes before moving to a wire rack.

Hint: Resting the dough overnight in the fridge deepens the flavour further, if you can wait that long.