



**A BARKING & DAGENHAM  
COMMUNITY-LED RECIPE BOOK**

# Come cook with us!

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# Foreword

by Councillor Saima Ashraf,  
Deputy Leader of Barking and  
Dagenham Council



The last few years have been tough and we know the cost-of-living crisis has affected many residents in Barking and Dagenham.

There's lots of support available through the council and our brilliant community. And, when it comes to food – whether it's free hot meals, help with cutting the cost of your food shop, or support through food banks, there's lots available right on your doorstep.

But we want to take our food support one step further. **We want to help people access the food they need for happy and healthy lives.** We want to empower people to grow, cook, share and eat hearty, wholesome food, **and share their skills and knowledge with others in their community.**

That's why we launched our 'Come Cook With Us' cooking workshops – to **bring people together** to cook low-cost, low-energy meals that are tasty and nourishing. Everyone should have the confidence to cook a wholesome meal from scratch on the cheap. And these cooking workshops offer a space for anyone and everyone to come along, **to learn and to share their own recipes, tips, skills and food stories.**

This is a wonderful selection of **recipes created collaboratively** by residents, with the support of our **brilliant project partners** and community groups. You'll find a variety of cuisines, reflecting the **diverse borough** we are so proud to call Barking and Dagenham.

We hope you enjoy!

**If you have a recipe  
you'd like to share,  
we'd love to see it!  
Visit [oneboroughvoice.  
lbbd.gov.uk/grow-cook-eat](http://oneboroughvoice.lbbd.gov.uk/grow-cook-eat)**

# Introduction

**This is a Barking and Dagenham recipe book, created by our residents with community partners.**

These recipes represent the diverse cultures and tastes that make our borough unique.

Many of the recipes in this book were created or shared at Come Cook With Us! – community cooking clubs that have been running in the borough since February 2023. The clubs bring residents together to cook and share food. Rather than simply following a recipe led by the facilitator, participants share their own knowledge, recipes and traditions, and discuss how they prepare or cook an ingredient, or their own way of cooking a meal.

Recipes and cooking skills need to be shared with our families and communities to keep them alive. We are grateful to everyone for sharing theirs, and hope that this book helps to preserve them, as well as celebrating the rich culinary heritage, knowledge and skills within our community.

To find out more about the cooking clubs, and find one in your local area, see [oneboroughvoice.lbbd.gov.uk/grow-cook-eat](http://oneboroughvoice.lbbd.gov.uk/grow-cook-eat)

**Want to help us** shape a fairer, sustainable food environment for everyone in the borough? Join our Food Partnership – find out more at [www.lbbd.gov.uk/food-partnership-and-action-plan](http://www.lbbd.gov.uk/food-partnership-and-action-plan)

## How to use the book

Recipes in this book are **TASTY**:

**T – Thrifty**, budget friendly

**A – All-in-one**, one pot meals

**S – Speedy**, meals in 30 minutes

**T – Terrific for kids**, recipes kids will love making and eating

**Y – Yummy**, snacks, sides and desserts

The recipes in this book include:

**Ingredients and method** – Most recipes use metric measurements. Some dried ingredients give measurements in cups instead. If you don't have a cup measure, 1 cup = 250g.

**Serving suggestions** – Some recipes have ideas of how to serve the dish, and what would go well with it.

**Swaps, tips and tricks** – Many ingredients can be swapped with something similar in your cupboard or at your local shop. Each recipe suggests some swaps, as well as additions or other tips for making it.

There is also a section for **Low Energy Cooking Tips, with easy ideas for reducing your gas/electricity costs whilst cooking.** If you need more support with your bills and finances, please see our Cost of Living support pages to find out what help is available to you.

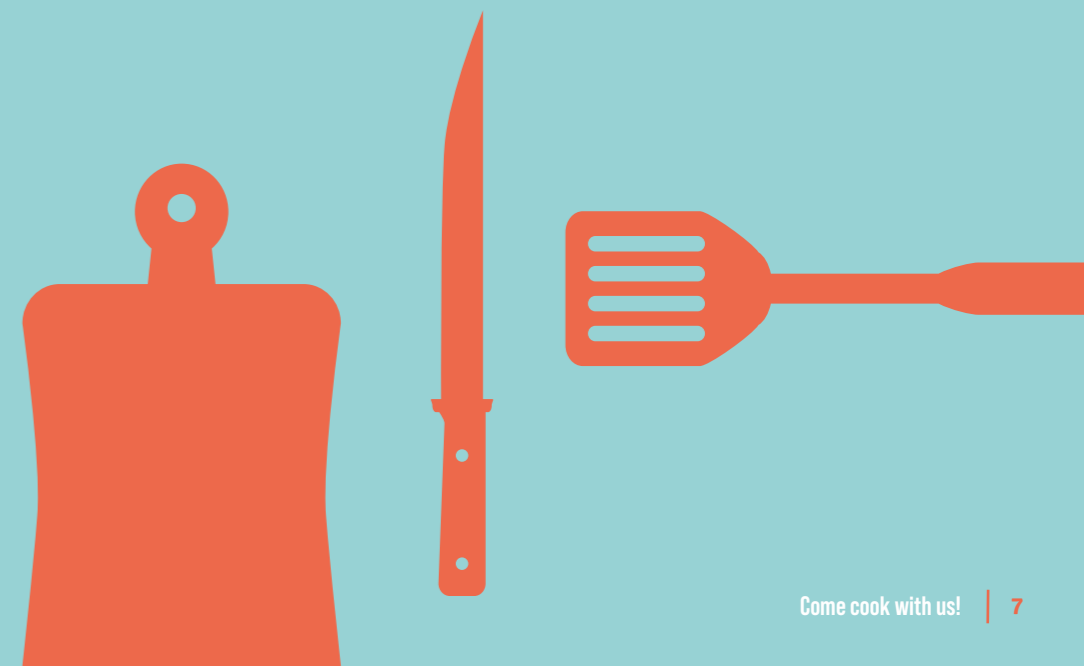
**Find cost of living support at**  
[www.lbbd.gov.uk/cost-living-support](http://www.lbbd.gov.uk/cost-living-support)



## Chapter 1

# Thrifty

Budget friendly eats that the whole family can enjoy! These thrifty recipes show that cooking on a budget doesn't mean sacrificing taste or nutrition. With a little creativity, and the help of a few **cupboard heroes** (see page 49), you can enjoy delicious, diverse and nutritious meals while keeping costs down. Try getting your vegetables from Barking market or your local shop – you may find it's cheaper than the supermarket!



# Cowboy Chilli

SERVES 4

Not only is this chilli both tasty AND affordable, it's also easy to adapt based on what you have in the house, and is a one-pot meal that saves on energy and washing up. Take a look in the swaps section for ideas on what alternatives you can use, but don't be afraid to play around with the recipe to create something tasty and unique!

## Ingredients

- > 1 small onion, chopped
- > 1 bell pepper, chopped
- > 1 tin baked beans
- > 1 tin red kidney beans
- > ½ tin tomatoes
- > 1 teaspoon cumin
- > 1 stock cube
- > 1 teaspoon pepper
- > 2 teaspoon sugar
- > 1 teaspoon vinegar
- > Chilli flakes to taste
- > 1 tablespoon oil
- > 1 bag frozen mixed veg

## Method

1. Put roughly a tablespoon of oil into a large saucepan.
2. Cook onion slowly on low heat for about 5 minutes or until golden brown.
3. Add bell pepper and cook for 5 more minutes on a low heat.
4. Add cumin, chilli and the rest of the ingredients into the pan.
5. Raise the heat, bring to the boil and then turn down to a low heat.
6. Cook for 30-45 minutes, stirring occasionally.

## Serving suggestions

- Top with some grated cheese, yoghurt, spring onion, a squeeze of lemon or coriander.
- Serve on a bed of rice, on top of a jacket potato, or with pasta.

## SWAPS

### TIPS AND TRICKS

- Kidney beans can be easily swapped for other tinned pulses such as chickpeas, cannellini beans or butter beans.
- If you don't have the spices in your cupboard, try using a pre-made Mexican spice mix.
- Frozen veg is always handy, but you can also use any fresh veg that you have.
- This works well in a slow cooker - instead of leaving to simmer, put it in the slow cooker. It'll take roughly 4 hours on high, or 6 hours on low.
- A couple of squares of dark chocolate grated in will give the chilli a richer flavour.

# Lentil Spinach Curry

SERVES 4

Lentil spinach curry, also known as Dal Palak or Dal Saag, can be traced back to the Indian subcontinent, specifically to the cuisine of the Indian and Pakistani state of Punjab. In Punjab, lentils are a staple food and form an integral part of the region's cuisine. This flavourful and nutritious dish combines cooked lentils, spinach, and a variety of aromatic spices for a hearty, wholesome meal.

## Ingredients

### For Dal

- > 1.5 cups red lentils OR yellow split peas
- > 2 tablespoon olive oil
- > 1 large onion, chopped
- > 1 big tomato cut into 6-8 wedges
- > 3 garlic cloves, minced
- > ½ teaspoon ginger
- > 1 teaspoon turmeric powder
- > ¼ teaspoon chilli powder
- > 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- > 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- > Spinach leaves (roughly 4 cups)
- > ½ teaspoon salt
- > 3 cups water
- > ¼ cup fresh chopped coriander (optional)

### For Tadka

- > 2 tablespoon ghee
- > 2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- > ½ teaspoon cumin seeds
- > 1 tablespoon curry leaves

## Method

1. For the dal, add the lentils/split peas and water to a large cooking pot and cook over a medium heat.
2. Put oil, chopped onions, tomatoes, ginger, garlic, spices and salt into the pot.
3. After 15 minutes when the dal is soft, then add spinach and cook without covering it on a low heat.
4. Stir occasionally, the consistency should not be too thick.
5. Prepare the tadka in a separate small pan by adding ghee on a medium heat.
6. When ghee is hot, add sliced garlic.
7. Wait until the garlic is slightly brown, then add cumin seeds and curry leaves. Cook quickly for a few seconds, then add to the lentil mixture.
8. Mix well, turn off heat.
9. Add fresh coriander and serve.

## Serving suggestions

- Serve with rice or flatbread, such as roti, chapati or naan.

## SWAPS

### TIPS AND TRICKS

- This recipe features a lot of spices. To save on costs, use 1 or 2 teaspoons of blended spice mix like Garam Masala.
- This dal tastes great with so many different vegetables! Add your favourites and experiment with the flavours.
- Add a tin of chickpeas or leftover chicken to make this feed more people.
- Blend leftovers and serve as a warming soup.

## Tadka

Tadka is a technique often used across the Indian Subcontinent, and has many different names such as chounk, tarka, bagar, or tempering in English. In this technique, whole or ground spices are briefly roasted in oil or ghee (clarified butter) in order to release their essential oils, which will enhance the flavour of the curry.



# Aubergine Curry

SERVES 4



This recipe uses Chinese aubergine (also known as eggplant or brinjal) which are long and skinny, with a thin skin and very few seeds. They do not require salting as they are less bitter than globe aubergines and they also roast quicker. These are ideal for stir-frying into a curry since they have few seeds and their skin melts in the mouth.

The recipe is an age-old delicacy in Indo-Burmese cultures where aubergine was considered a healing fruit. The leaves, root and fruit of aubergine was used in traditional chinese medicine to treat an array of ailments such as toothaches, abscesses, wounds and sores, fever, and intestinal disorders. The recipe includes the warming and anti-inflammatory spice turmeric.

## Ingredients

- > 20 Chinese aubergine
- > 2 medium onions
- > 2 tomatoes
- > 4 cloves of fresh garlic (peeled)
- > ¼ teaspoon salt or to taste
- > 2-3 extra hot green chillies (or more added to taste)
- > 2 tablespoon oil (use mustard oil for extra spice)
- > 30g coriander leaf
- > 2 lemons
- > 2 teaspoon turmeric
- > 2 teaspoon paprika (or chilli powder for extra spice)

## Method

1. Wash aubergine and let it dry on a paper towel.
2. Gently make 4 cuts down the length of the aubergine. Don't cut all the way through.
3. In a deep mixing bowl add 1 teaspoon of turmeric, 1 teaspoon of paprika and salt.
4. Toss the aubergine in the bowl several times until well coated. Let the aubergine rest in the mixing bowl for 10 minutes.
5. In a wok, add hot oil and fry the aubergine until it changes colour to a pale purple. Remove and keep aside.
6. In the wok, add finely diced garlic and cook gently until golden brown.
7. Next add thinly sliced onion and cook gently for 7-8 minutes until the onions soften.
8. Add finely diced tomato and cook gently for 3-4 minutes.
9. Add the salt, whole green chilli and lemon juice.
10. Toss the fried aubergine into the wok and add the remaining paprika and turmeric. Cover and cook for 15 minutes or until the flesh of the aubergine softens. Add half a cup of water if needed.
11. Add chopped coriander and serve.

## Serving suggestions

- Serve with rice or flatbread, such as roti, chapati or naan.

## SWAPS

### TIPS AND TRICKS

- Add cumin and mustard seeds to the hot oil in the wok for extra flavour
- Tamarind paste (½ teaspoon), and dried mango powder (½ teaspoon) and dried gooseberry/amla powder (½ teaspoon) may be added to give that special sweet and sour taste
- If you can't find Chinese aubergine, replace with 4 thinly sliced regular aubergines or even try using Okra.



**Chinese aubergines**

These are best bought from your local asian grocery store, they look just like a normal aubergine in colour except they are long and thin.

# Ital Stew Peas

SERVES  
3 TO 4

Ital food is traditional in the Rastafarian communities of the Caribbean and means food containing no meat and little or no salt. Stew peas is a fragrant dish with the heat of the fruity scotch bonnet chilli and packed full of red kidney beans for protein and a rich flavour. You can change the vegetables seasonally, using squash or sweet potato in the winter instead of peppers.

## Ingredients

- > 1 tablespoon oil
- > 1 medium white onion
- > 3 cloves garlic
- > 1 scotch bonnet chilli
- > 2 carrots
- > 1 red pepper
- > 1 can kidney beans, drained
- > 5 sprigs fresh thyme (or 2 teaspoons dried thyme)
- > 1 teaspoon paprika
- > ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
- > ½ block (100g) creamed coconut + 100ml warm water
- > Pinch of salt

## Method

1. Peel and dice the onion. Cut the scotch bonnet in half widthways and dice the bottom half. Finely chop or mince the garlic.
2. Heat the oil in a large pan or wok then add onion and cook for 4-5 minutes until turning translucent.
3. Add the chopped scotch bonnet and garlic and cook for 2-3 minutes more. Meanwhile, finely dice the carrot and red pepper into small even sized pieces.
4. Add the carrot and pepper to the pan, plus the thyme, paprika, black pepper and a pinch of salt. Cover and simmer for about 10 minutes.
5. Add the red kidney beans, coconut cream, warm water and the half of the scotch bonnet on the stem. Add a pinch of salt (less salt for a more authentic Ital dish).
6. Cover and simmer for another 10 minutes until all the vegetables are soft.
7. Before serving, fish out the scotch bonnet on the stem and any whole sprigs of thyme remaining.

## Serving suggestions

- Serve with rice or add spinners (small dumplings). To make them combine ½ cup (125g) plain flour with ¼ cup (65ml) water plus a pinch of salt into a stiff dough. Roll into long thin sausage shapes and then snap or cut off 2-3cm pieces and drop them in the stew for the last 10 minutes of simmering.

## SWAPS

### TIPS AND TRICKS

- Scotch bonnet can be hard to find, but don't panic! Any chilli will work well in its place, or even ½ teaspoon of cayenne pepper. If you don't like spice, don't feel the need to add any at all and just enjoy this wholesome dish.
- Kidney beans can be replaced with any tinned beans you have to hand.
- Replace the block of coconut with half a tin of coconut milk.

# Misir Wot (Ethiopian Lentil Stew)

S P

SERVES 4

As many Ethiopian Orthodox Christians regularly fast from animal products, a lot of traditional Ethiopian recipes use plant-based ingredients. Most dishes use traditional spice mixes of berbere or mekelesha. You can get these in some international stores, make your own or add spice with fresh or dried chilli. This is a simple yet flavourful red lentil stew that can be enjoyed on its own or as part of a larger meal.

## Ingredients

- > 2 medium white onions (approx. 250g), peeled
- > 30ml oil
- > 2 cloves of garlic
- > Thumb-sized portion of fresh ginger
- > 200g tomato puree
- > 2 tablespoon berbere spice
- > 250g (1 cup) red lentils, rinsed with cold water
- > 1 tablespoon mekelesha spice (see swaps to make your own)
- > ¼ teaspoon sea salt
- > ¼ teaspoon black pepper

## Method

1. Finely chop the onions. Crush the garlic and finely chop or grate the ginger.
2. Dry fry the onions over a medium heat for 3-4 minutes until they start to go translucent and release water.
3. Add the oil and cook for 5 minutes. Then add the garlic and ginger and cook for another 5 minutes until the onions are soft.
4. Add the berbere spice (or chilli), tomato puree and salt and cook for 20-25 minutes, stirring regularly to avoid sticking. It will start to turn a dark red.
5. Boil 750ml of water.
6. Add the rinsed lentils and water then cover with a lid and reduce to a simmer.
7. Cook for about 20 minutes until the lentils are getting soft, stirring regularly.
8. Add the mekelesha (or garam masala) and stir through. Add more water if it is too thick. Cook for another 10 minutes. The lentils should be soft but still holding their shape and not be mushy.
9. Remove from the heat and serve.

## Serving suggestions

- Serve with Injera, the traditional fermented Ethiopian bread. Alternatively, use naan bread or flatbreads.
- This dish is often served as one of several dishes on a gebeta (circular platter) topped with injera and different vegetable and lentil dishes.
- To make a side dish of atlikt wot (cabbage stew) heat 1 teaspoon garlic paste and 1 teaspoon ginger paste in some oil then add 1 sliced onions and ½ sliced white cabbage, 1 teaspoon turmeric and 1 teaspoon ground cumin, salt and pepper and cook for 10-12 minutes until soft.

## SWAPS

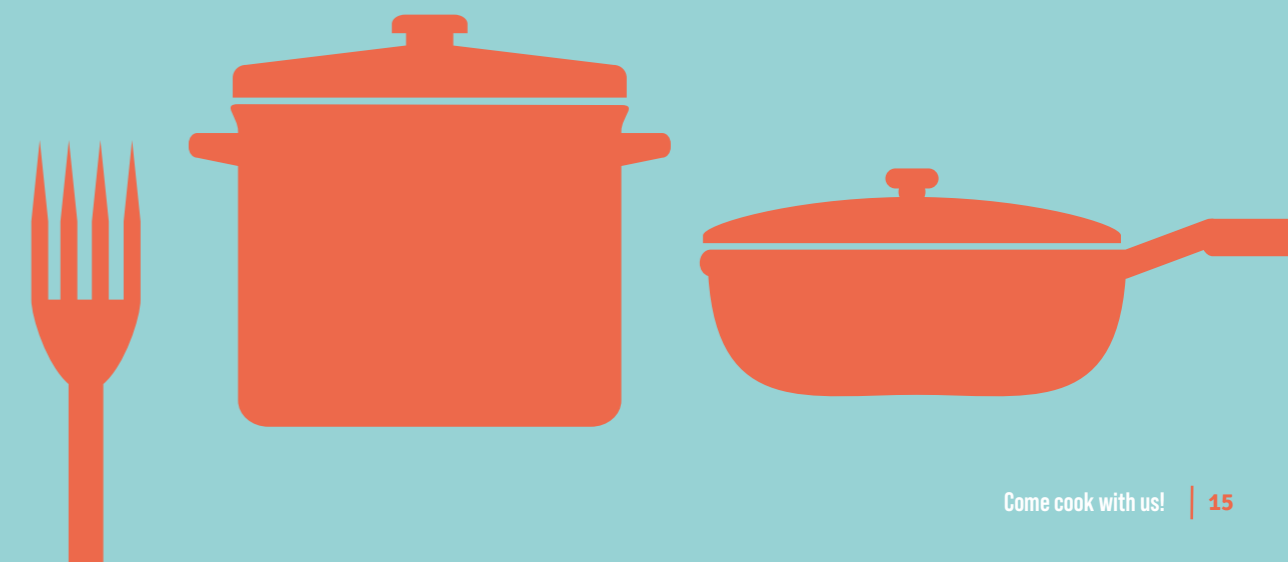
### TIPS AND TRICKS

- To make your own mekelesha: roast then grind 10 black cardamon pods, 2 tablespoons black peppercorns, 4 inch cinnamon sticks, 1 tablespoon cumin seeds, 6 whole cloves, 2 teaspoons ground nutmeg.
- Garam masala can be used in place of mekelesha.
- Instead of berbere spice, use half chilli powder, half paprika.
- Although not traditional, other lentils and peas can be used instead of red lentils for this dish. Try green lentils, chana dal, or even mung beans – just alter the cooking time as per the instructions on the packaging.



## Chapter 2 All-in-One

One pot wonders are a great way of not only saving on the washing up, but also saving energy when cooking. Don't forget to take a look at our **Low Energy Cooking Tips** on page 50.





# Party Jollof

SERVES 6



Jollof rice is a dish enjoyed by many West African people with every country, town, and even family, having their own recipe. It is a spicy one pot rice dish with a rich tomato base with origins from the Wolof tribe found in Senegal, Gambia and Mauritania with the dish also being popular in Nigeria and beyond. To get the 'party' flavour, the dish is finished off in the oven to get a smoky flavour however you can miss this step if you don't have or don't want to use an oven.

This dish works great as a main when you incorporate sources of plant protein, such as chickpeas or lentils, but also as a side. It freezes well, so batch cook this and enjoy this tasty dish even when you're in a rush.

## Ingredients

- > 500g (2 cups) of Golden Sella rice (a type of basmati rice found in supermarkets or Afro-Caribbean shops) or long grain easy cook rice.
- > 2 x 440g tins plum or chopped tomatoes (if tomatoes are in season you can use 12 small fresh tomatoes)
- > 1 tube tomato puree
- > 125g (½ cup) frozen mixed vegetables/peas
- > 2 onions (ideally 1 white, 1 red)
- > 2 bay leaves
- > ½ teaspoon thyme
- > ½ teaspoon rosemary
- > 1 teaspoon curry powder
- > ¼ teaspoon sea salt
- > 60ml vegetable oil
- > 2 vegetable stock cubes
- > 1 red bell pepper
- > 1 scotch bonnet chilli
- > 1 inch fresh ginger
- > 2 cloves garlic

## Method

1. In a blender/food processor add tomatoes, bell pepper, ½ white onion, 1 whole scotch bonnet, 2 cloves garlic and ½ inch ginger. Blend till smooth.
2. Peel and chop or slice the red onion. Slice ½ of the white onion and keep separate.
3. In a pan, heat oil and add the sliced/chopped red onion and stir-fry for 1 minute. Then add the tomato puree and cook for a further minute.
4. Add the blended mix, bay leaves, curry powder, dried thyme, rosemary, stock cube, salt and cook on a medium heat for 10-12 minutes until reduced. Stir occasionally to avoid burning. This stew will be the base for the jollof.
5. Wash the rice thoroughly and parboil in a separate pot for 5 minutes. Rinse and add to the stew and mix.
6. Cover the pot with foil/parchment paper before putting a lid over it. Put on a low heat and gently cook for 30 minutes. Mid way, stir the rice with a wooden or plastic spoon as the sauce tends to stay at the bottom of the pot. This will also ensure the rice cooks evenly.
7. Once the rice is done, add the sliced white onions and frozen vegetables and stir through.
8. To get the 'party' flavour, transfer the jollof to an oven safe dish and cook in a preheated oven at 200C for 10 mins. This will give it a smoky taste like it's been cooked over an open fire. Hence the name 'party jollof.'

## Serving suggestions

- Traditionally served with sides of grilled beef, chicken and mixed vegetables. Grilled halloumi or paneer is a great alternative for vegetarians, or marinated grilled tofu.

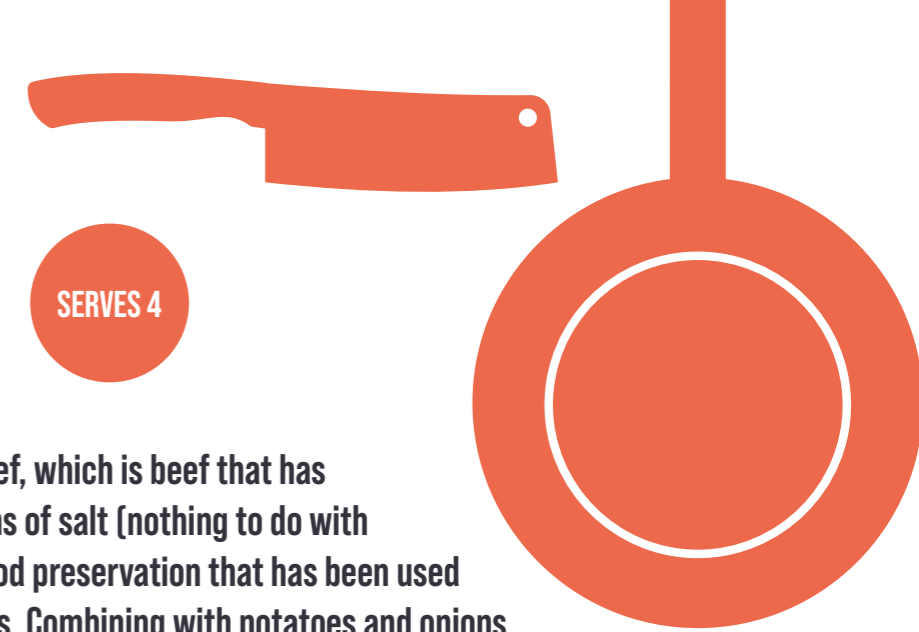
## SWAPS

### TIPS AND TRICKS

- Jollof is popularly served with fried or baked plantain. You can either peel the plantain and cut into diagonal slices and fry or bake in some oil until brown and crispy. Or if you prefer it softer, can slice open the plantain lengthwise and bake in the oven for about 12-15 minutes on each side until soft and brown.
- To add a protein kick and make this a complete meal, include lentils or chickpeas when cooking. Cook lentils separately and stir in so the consistency of the jollof remains correct.

# Corned Beef Hash

SERVES 4



Storecupboard staple using corned beef, which is beef that has been treated with coarse-grained corns of salt (nothing to do with the vegetable!). Salting is a form of food preservation that has been used by many cultures for hundreds of years. Combining with potatoes and onions makes this classic comfort food.

## Ingredients

- > 500g potatoes
- > 1 onion
- > 5g fresh thyme
- > 1 clove of garlic
- > 2-3 tablespoon of oil or butter
- > 50g cheddar cheese
- > ½ tin of corned beef
- > Salt and pepper to taste

## Method

1. Peel and dice potatoes.
2. Place in salted water and bring to boil, then reduce the heat so the water is simmering.
3. Leave potatoes until cooked (roughly 15 minutes).
4. Peel and slice the onions and garlic, and fry in the oil/butter on a low-medium heat until golden brown and fragrant.
5. Put potatoes, onion and garlic into a baking tray.
6. Add salt, pepper and thyme and toss in the tray to coat.
7. Dice corned beef, add to tray and gently mix in.
8. Add cheese on top.
9. Place in the oven and bake until golden.

## Serving suggestions

- Serve with a refreshing side salad.

## SWAPS

### TIPS AND TRICKS

- If you can't find fresh thyme, use a tablespoon of dried thyme or another dried herb.
- You can tell a potato is cooked by gently poking it with a fork or the tip of a knife. If it goes in easily, your potatoes are done!

# Chicken Noodle Soup

SERVES  
4 TO 6



A warming, flavourful dish packed with veggies, tender chicken and noodles. This is a light yet comforting soup, delicious as a starter or main.

## Ingredients

- > 700g chicken breast, diced
- > 1 onion, chop half
- > 1 bay leaf
- > 3-4 whole peppercorn (optional)
- > ½ tin sweetcorn
- > 3 carrots, peel and chop 2
- > 1 spring onion, chopped
- > 1 chicken stock cube (follow pack instructions to make)
- > 3 celery stalks, chop 2
- > 1 pack of vermicelli noodles
- > 1 stick lemongrass (optional)
- > 4 tablespoon oil
- > 1 teaspoon paprika
- > 1 teaspoon turmeric
- > ½ teaspoon chilli flakes (optional)

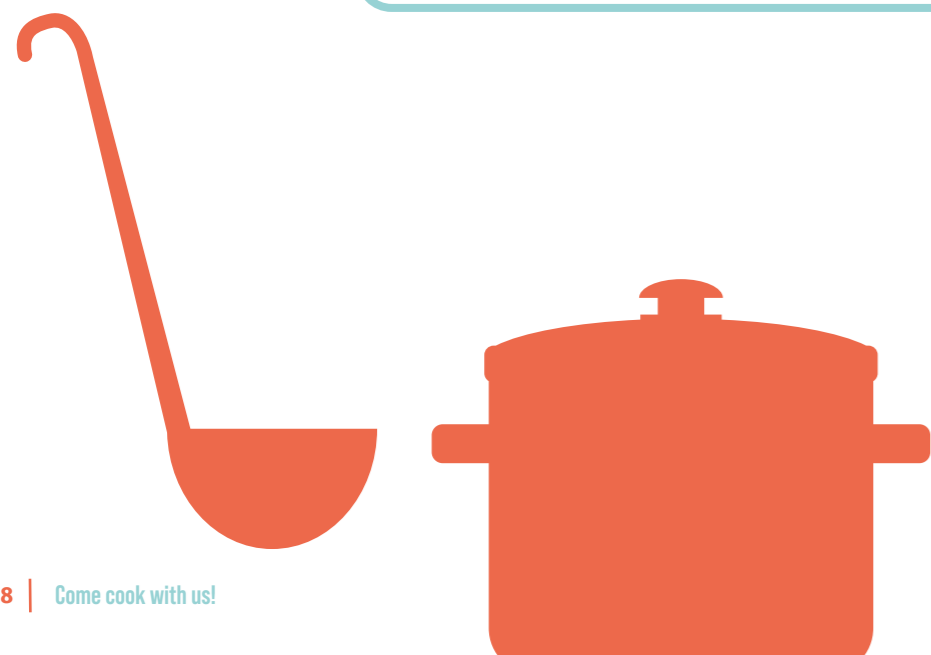
## Method

1. In a separate pan heat 2 tablespoons of oil then add chicken with salt, pepper and a pinch of paprika. Cook for 8-10 minutes or until cooked through and golden brown.
2. Chop your onions, spring onions, celery and carrots.
3. Pour 2 tablespoons of oil into a pot and add your chopped onions and spring onions until they turn golden. Add salt and pepper to taste.
4. Once the onions are soft add the chopped carrots, celery, sweetcorn until they start to sweat. Then add paprika, turmeric and chilli flakes.
5. Add vegetable stock and bring to boil. Then reduce heat, cover and simmer for 20 minutes or until carrots are tender.
6. Add noodles and simmer until noodles are cooked (see packet, but this should take less than 5 minutes).
7. Add chopped coriander and lemongrass. Cover and reduce to simmer for a further 4-5 minutes.
8. Stir in chicken and enjoy!

## SWAPS

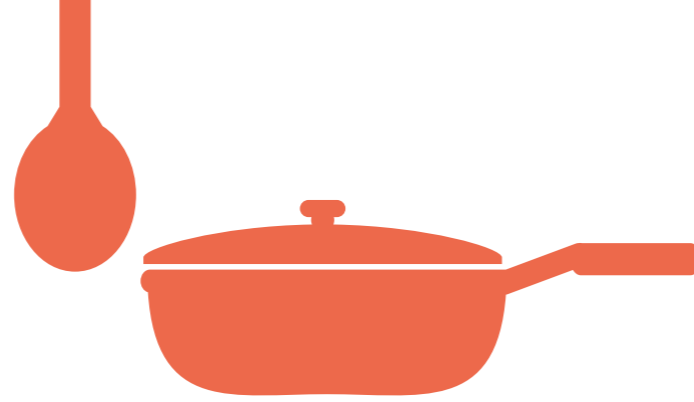
### TIPS AND TRICKS

- If not using lemongrass or peppercorns, finish the recipe by squeezing some lemon and a good grind of pepper over the soup.
- No chicken stock cube? Just season your boiling water with salt and pepper.



# Sausage, beans and greens

SERVES 4



This recipe was devised by Dan, head chef of BD Together, whose recipes are eaten by school children across the borough. This one focuses on chard, a leafy vegetable in the beet family that is very easy to grow in the UK.

## Ingredients

- > 2 sliced red onions
- > 2 chopped garlic cloves
- > 8 sausages – vegan, vegetarian or meat
- > 400g tin chopped tomatoes
- > 175ml of veg or chicken stock
- > 400g cannellini beans
- > 150g chopped chard

## Method

1. Heat oil in lidded saucepan on medium heat, sweat down the sliced red onions for 4 mins, then add the garlic and sausages to the pan.
2. Once the sausages start to caramelise add the chard to the pan and fry for 2 minutes, then add in the chopped tomatoes and stock.
3. Cook on a medium heat for about 10 minutes, add the beans and cook for a further 5 minutes until the sausages are cooked through.
4. Pour into a deep bowl.

## Serving suggestions

- Serve with a crusty roll and butter.

## SWAPS

### TIPS AND TRICKS

- Meat-free sausages are often cheaper than traditional meat ones, try looking in the freezer section.
- You can make instant stock by dissolving a stock cube or powder in boiling water. If you don't have any, just use boiling water and season the stew with salt and pepper.
- Any tinned bean, such as butter beans, kidney beans and chickpeas, will work well in this.
- If they're in season, use 6 small fresh tomatoes instead of tinned.
- Swap the chard for any leafy green such as kale, bok choy, spinach or spring greens.

# Whole Chicken Curry

SERVES 5



This curry is a firm favourite and easily adapts to become vegetarian by using paneer, or vegan by using tofu.

## Ingredients

- > 1 medium chicken, approx. 750g (cut into small pieces)
- > 3 onions
- > 3 tomatoes
- > 1 clove garlic and similar amount of ginger
- > 4 tablespoon oil
- > Whole chillies (optional)
- > Spices #1
  - 1 bay leaf
  - 1 cinnamon stick
  - 1 cardamom pod
  - 2-3 cloves
  - 4-5 whole black peppercorns
- > Spices #2 - Mixed spice (teaspoon of each)
  - Chilli powder
  - Haldi (Turmeric Powder)
  - Garam masala
  - Coriander powder
  - Paprika powder
  - Fenugreek powder
  - Black cardamom powder
  - Cinnamon powder

## Method

1. Peel and cut 3 onions into thin slices and chop 3 tomatoes into small chunks. Grate one chunk of ginger and clove of garlic. Add them all to a pot with heated oil.
2. Finely chop a few chillies (according to preference of spice) and add them into the pot along with 100ml of water. Add in 'Spices #1' and 1 tablespoon of salt.
3. Place a lid on top of the pot and leave to simmer for 20 minutes on a medium/high heat.
4. Once the contents of the pot have become soft, use an electric hand blender and create a paste.
5. Add in the chicken along with 1.5 tablespoons of Spices #2 and stir occasionally on a medium heat in order to let it steam.
6. Once the chicken has turned golden yellow and cooked evenly through, add in 3 pints (6 cups) of water and leave to boil on a high heat.
7. Once the water has come up to a boil, place the lid on top and leave to simmer on a low heat for 10 minutes in order to reduce the water. When the curry is at a consistency you like, take off the heat and serve.

## Serving suggestions

- Serve on a bed of rice, or with flatbread such as roti, chapati or naan.

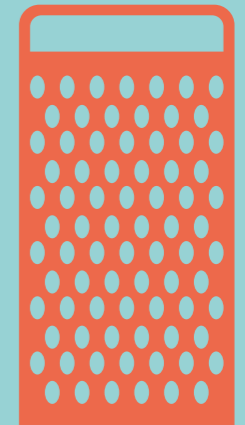
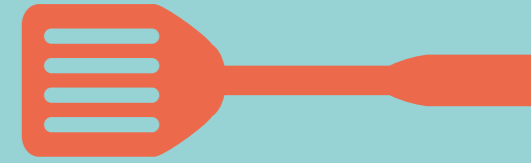
## SWAPS

### TIPS AND TRICKS

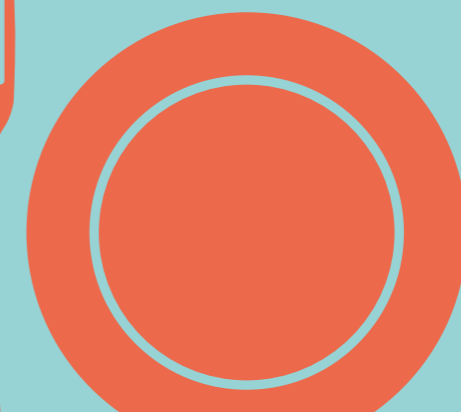
- No fresh tomatoes to hand? Just use 1 tin of chopped tomatoes and add a little less water.
- Replace the chicken with paneer (Indian hard cheese) or tofu (protein source made from soya beans).
- Experiment with spices, using whatever you have to hand.



## Chapter 3 Speedy



Fast, fresh and tasty meals for quick lunches and hectic evenings.



# Easy Cheesy Pasta

SERVES 4



This easy cheesy pasta takes inspiration from the viral Tik Tok pasta bake recipe. It makes for a delicious, nutritious meal that packs a punch!

## Ingredients

- > 1 medium onion, chopped
- > 4-6 whole cloves of garlic, peeled
- > 200g cherry tomatoes
- > 250g mushrooms, chopped
- > 250g soft cheese
- > 250g pasta
- > 4 tablespoons olive oil
- > ½ teaspoon red pepper or chilli flakes
- > 3-4 fresh basil leaves

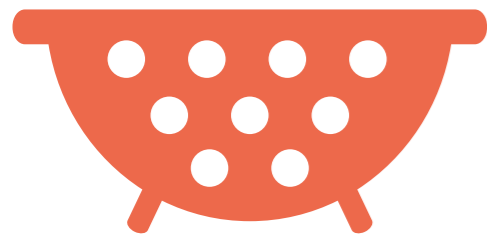
## Method

1. Preheat oven to 200°C.
2. Place tomatoes, mushrooms, onions and whole garlic cloves in a medium baking dish.
3. Drizzle liberally with olive oil, sprinkle with red pepper flakes, and add salt and pepper to taste.
4. Bake for 30-35 minutes.
5. Meanwhile, cook pasta according to package directions, reserving ½ cup of pasta water.
6. Immediately after removing from oven, toss in cream cheese and use a wooden spoon or spatula to stir the roasted mixture, evenly distributing cheese over the rest of the ingredients. Add in reserved pasta water as needed to create a creamier consistency.
7. Stir in cooked pasta, top with basil and serve!

## SWAPS

### TIPS AND TRICKS

- Swap the cream cheese for a soft cheese of your choice! Feta or Boursin both work great and can be added to the baking dish rather than at the end.
- Switch up the veggies. Chuck in any veg you have at home, like broccoli, pepper or something else, to add that extra goodness!



# Prawn Bean Curry

SERVES 4



This authentic prawn bean curry, also known as Beans Bharta, is a staple food to fishermen in Bangladesh. Packed with fibre, vitamins and minerals, it can be on the table in just 20 minutes. The thick green texture makes it stand out from other curries.

## Ingredients

- > 100g peeled and cooked prawns
- > 1 onion
- > 180g green beans
- > 3 cloves of fresh garlic (peeled)
- > ¼ teaspoon salt or to taste
- > 2-3 extra hot green chillies (or more added to taste)
- > 1 teaspoon oil
- > 30g fresh green coriander
- > 1 lemon

## Method

1. Add the trimmed beans in a stock pot with 10ml water and steam the beans for 5-7 minutes or until soft. Remove the beans from the stock pot and let them cool.
2. In a saucepan, add in the oil and stir fry the chopped onions, chopped garlic and whole chillies for 5-7 minutes. Do not let the onions and garlic turn brown.
3. Add in the pre-boiled beans and cooked/peeled prawns into the saucepan and stir fry together with the onions, garlic and chillies. The prawns must only be stir fried for 1-2 minutes and no longer because they will harden if over cooked.
4. Turn off the heat and let the contents of the stock pot cool. Once cooled, add in the juice of one lemon, salt to taste, and blend into a thick smooth paste (do not add water while blending).

## Serving suggestions

- Serve with rice or naan bread.

## SWAPS

### TIPS AND TRICKS

- Substitute prawns with tofu or tilapia.
- Use mustard oil for extra spice.
- If you don't have a blender, mash the curry with a potato masher or fork.

## Special equipment

- > Blender

# Tilapia with Hardo

SERVES 4 TO 6



Tilapia is a readily available and affordable fish. With a mild taste, it works with all kinds of spices and flavours. Here is a Jamaican version served with sweet Hardo (hard-dough) bread.

## Ingredients

- > 850g tilapia fillets
- > 4-6 tablespoon flour
- > 2 teaspoons distilled malt vinegar
- > ½ teaspoon brown sugar
- > 1 plantain, sliced into long strips
- > Jamaican Hardo Bread
- > 2 onions, sliced into rounds
- > 3 cloves of garlic
- > 2 peppers, sliced
- > 4 carrots, sliced into sticks
- > Seasoning:
  - 2 tablespoon Jamaican fish seasoning
  - 1 tablespoon ground garlic
  - ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
  - Black pepper to taste
  - 1 teaspoon crushed pimento seeds

## Method

1. Mix seasoning in a bowl. Mix half of this into the flour, and rub the rest onto the fish.
2. Heat some oil up in a pan, coat both sides of the fish in flour and place into the pan.
3. Cook fish on a medium-low heat for 3-4 minutes on both sides. Remove from pan and place onto a kitchen towel.
4. Add onions and garlic to the pan and cook until soft and browned. Then add peppers, carrots, vinegar and sugar and cook for a further 3-4 minutes.
5. Remove kitchen towel from under fish and place vegetables on top of the fish and cover with foil to keep warm.
6. Slice plantain into long strips and fry until golden brown on each side.
7. Serve with Jamaican Hardo bread.

## SWAPS

### TIPS AND TRICKS

- Jamaican Hardo (hard-dough) bread is slightly denser and sweeter than regular bread. If you can't find any, just use regular bread, or brioche has a similarly sweet, buttery flavour.
- If you can't find plantain, just use an unripe banana.

# Fateha's Chilli Paneer

SERVES 4

Fateha provided this Indo-Chinese recipe at a recent Taste Festival at Beam County Primary School in Dagenham. She likes this one-pot recipe because it's easy and speedy to make, whilst packing an amazing flavour!

## Ingredients

- > 200g paneer
- > 1 pack sweet and sour sauce (or make your own)
- > 2-3 green chillies (optional)
- > 1 teaspoon cumin powder
- > 1 teaspoon coriander powder
- > 1 onion
- > 1 green/red pepper
- > Fresh coriander (optional)

## Method

1. Chop your paneer into cubes.
2. Slice green chilli, peppers and onions.
3. Heat a little oil in a pan, and fry the paneer cubes until lightly browned.
4. Add the onions, peppers and chillies (optional), cook until slightly browned.
5. Add sauce and spices, make sure all the ingredients are coated with sauce.
6. Top with fresh coriander and serve.

## Serving suggestions

- Serve with rice or naan bread.

## SWAPS

### TIPS AND TRICKS

- Use tofu instead of paneer.
- Make your own sauce: mix 6 tablespoon ketchup, 2 tablespoon soy sauce, 2 teaspoon sugar, 0.5 teaspoon red chilli powder, 2 tablespoon white vinegar, ½ cup water.

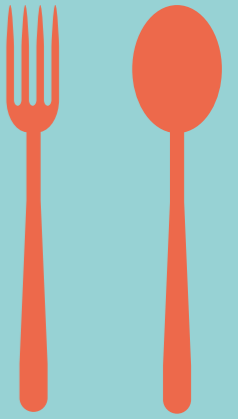
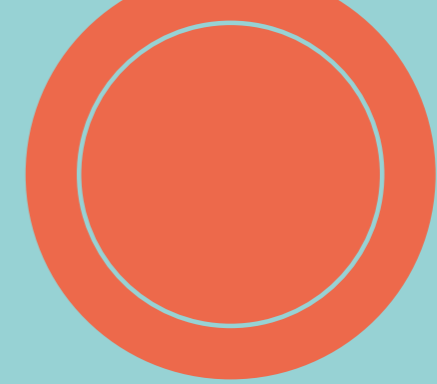




## Chapter 4

# Terrific for kids

Recipes in this section are great to make and eat with children. Whether you are a parent or carer in need of simple and healthy child-friendly meal ideas, or a teacher delivering a cooking lesson, these recipes are for you! For more information on our school food education programme and resources, get in touch at [goodfood@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:goodfood@lbbd.gov.uk)





# Daddy's Pizza

SERVES 2



Recreate the flavours of a pizza in just a few minutes.  
This incredibly adaptable recipe will get kids smiling at snack time!

## Ingredients

- > 2 slices of bread (brown or white)
- 40g Cheddar cheese
- 20g tomato sauce (or Ketchup)
- 1 teaspoon mixed herbs

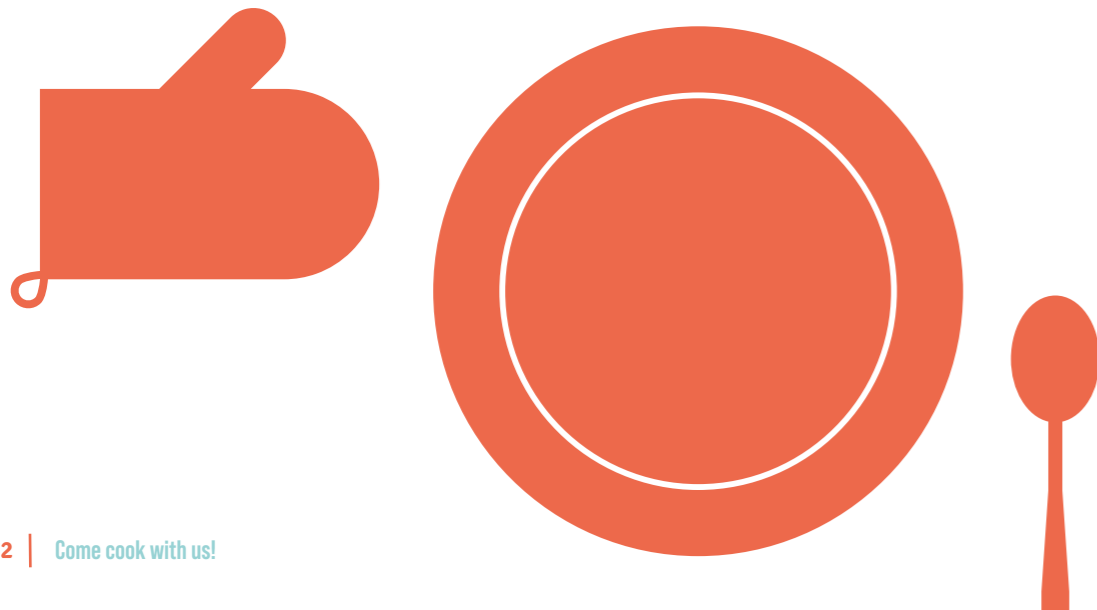
## Method

1. Lightly toast slices of bread.
2. Add mixed herbs to tomato paste, combine well.
3. Spread tomato paste with mixed herbs on one side of the toast.
4. Add grated cheese.
5. Place under the grill until cheese is melted and golden brown.

## SWAPS

### TIPS AND TRICKS

- Switch it up by adding additional toppings of your choice. Whether it's veggies like mushroom or peppers, or leftover cooked meats from the day before.
- Use whatever cheese you have in the fridge – or even a combination of cheeses if you're in the mood for it!
- You can experiment with different types of bread – just use what you have at home!





# Falafels

MAKES  
8 FALAFELS



Traditionally from Egypt and popular across Middle Eastern cuisines, falafels are easy to make, protein packed and are well loved by kids and adults alike! Great on their own in lunchboxes, they also go well in wraps and alongside salads. Makes 8 falafels (2-3 portions, depending on how hungry you are!)

## Ingredients

- > 1 tin chickpeas, drained (reserve the juice)
- > 1 medium onion, chopped
- > 1½ cloves garlic, chopped
- > 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
- > 2 tablespoon flour
- > 1 teaspoon coriander
- > 1 teaspoon cumin
- > ½ teaspoon baking powder
- > Salt and pepper
- > 2 tablespoon oil
- > Oil for cooking

## Method

1. Preheat oven to 180 degrees or gas mark 5.
2. Roughly blend all ingredients except oil.
3. Divide into 8 portions and roll into balls put on baking tray.
4. Cover balls lightly in oil with your hands or spray balls with spray oil.
5. Bake for 15-20 minutes, or until firm.

## Serving suggestions

- Lovely served with hummus, tzatziki (make your own by mixing plain dairy or soya yogurt with a sprinkle of dried mint and a pinch of salt) and a salad of tomatoes and cucumber.
- Put it all together into a wrap for a filling meal.

## SWAPS

### TIPS AND TRICKS

- As an alternative, make your falafel in the same way but using:
  - 1 tin baked beans, drained (keep the sauce)
  - 1 medium onion, chopped
  - 1 medium cooked potato
  - 1-2 tablespoon flour
  - ½ teaspoon baking powder
  - Salt and pepper
  - Oil for cooking
- Don't drain the chickpea water (also known as Aquafaba). It can be used to make a tasty sauce. Just add chopped tomatoes and your choice of spices, and heat on a medium-high heat till thick.



# Banana Fritters

SERVES  
3 TO 4



These fritters are naturally sweetened with banana, and are a quick and easy treat for any time of day.

## Ingredients

- > 3 ripe bananas
- > 1 cup all-purpose flour
- > ¼ cup oil
- > Pinch of salt (optional)
- > 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- > ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- > ½ teaspoon mixed spice

## Method

1. Mash 3 ripe bananas with a fork.
2. Add your vanilla extract, cinnamon, mixed spice and salt to the mashed bananas.
3. Add the flour.
4. Stir with a spoon until your mixture is fully combined; the mixture should not be too thick or thin – it should flow easily off a spoon.
5. Pour about a quarter of a cup of oil in a 10-inch pan and heat it over medium-high heat; once your oil is hot, pour the fritter mix in the pan by the spoonful.
6. Once bubbles appear in the top of the fritter and the bottom is golden brown, flip the fritter and cook until the other side is brown – about 2 minutes per side.
7. Remove fritter from pan and drain on paper towel or baking paper – the riper your bananas are, the sweeter your fritters will be (you don't need to add sugar).
8. Serve and enjoy!

## Serving suggestions

- These are delicious as they are, sprinkled with sugar and served with yogurt or cream, or maybe a drizzle of honey or syrup. You can also serve with fresh berries for added flavour – a great way to top up on your five a day!

## SWAPS

### TIPS AND TRICKS

- Add some extra flavour to your fritters by including ¼ teaspoon of nutmeg.
- You can also experiment with different flours, like wholewheat, chickpea or buckwheat.



# BBQ Chicken

SERVES 8



Sticky and irresistible, this is a fun and popular way to prepare chicken. Delicious hot or cold - and great for lunchboxes!

## Ingredients

- > 800g chicken (thighs or wings)
- > 8 tablespoon tomato puree
- > 4 tablespoon honey
- > 4 tablespoon paprika
- > 4 garlic cloves
- > 8 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- > 4 teaspoon oil

## Method

1. Preheat the oven to 200C.
2. Mix sauce ingredients together in a bowl, adding salt and pepper to taste.
3. Coat chicken in the sauce, allowing to marinate where possible.
4. Lay on a baking tray ensuring a bit of space between each piece of chicken, this will allow for better cooking and crisping.
5. Bake for 20-25mins. Check that the chicken is properly cooked and that the juices run clear before serving.

## Serving suggestions

- Serves well with sides like coleslaw, potato salad, pasta salad, corn on the cob or wedges.
- Leftovers can be used to top pizza or as a sandwich filling the next day.
- Try making BBQ chicken burritos - add cheese, rice and veggies for a healthy wrap that's perfect for lunchboxes!

## SWAPS

### TIPS AND TRICKS

- This marinade can be used on a variety of meats, and meat substitutes.
- If you can't find Worcestershire sauce, it can be substituted for tamari or soy sauce.
- Honey can be replaced with maple syrup.
- The flavour gets stronger the longer you leave your meat in the marinade. You can even leave it overnight in the fridge.

# Jamaican Patties

MAKES 8 TO 10 PATTIES



Like a traditional English patty, but with the flavours of the Caribbean. Traditionally made with beef, we've suggested a couple of vegetarian alternatives in the swaps section. These are great heated up as an after school snack, or cold in lunchboxes.

## Ingredients

### Pastry

- > 500g plain flour
- > 230g unsalted butter
- > 2 teaspoon turmeric
- > 2 teaspoon garam masala or mild curry powder
- > 2 teaspoon salt
- > 240ml ice cold water

### Filling

- > 2 tablespoon olive oil
- > 2 onions finely chopped
- > 2 bell peppers
- > 6 spring onions
- > 1kg beef mince
- > 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- > 1 scotch bonnet chilli
- > 4 teaspoon garam masala
- > 2 teaspoon paprika
- > 2 teaspoon turmeric
- > 2 teaspoon salt
- > 2 teaspoon fresh thyme
- > 380ml beef stock
- > Grated cheese (optional)

## Special equipment

- > Food processor

## Method

1. Put all pastry ingredients (except the water) in a food processor and tap the pulse button to slowly incorporate the butter into the flour.
2. Add ice-cold water bit by bit and knead into the dough until it forms a play-doh like texture. (You may need a little less/more water than stated above). Place pastry covered in the fridge whilst you create the beef filling.
3. Heat oil in pan, add onions and red peppers and sauté for 5 minutes until soft, then add spring onions. Add mince, garlic, chilli, paprika, garam masala, turmeric and salt. Stir through until mince has browned.
4. Finally add thyme and stock. Place lid on and leave to simmer for 15 minutes whilst you cut out pastry.
5. Preheat oven to 180C, and remove pastry from the fridge.
6. Lightly flour a surface and roll out pastry till it's about 1cm thick.
7. Cut circles out of the pastry, you should have 14 circles.
8. Put circles onto parchment paper, add 2-3 tablespoon of beef mixture in the middle and grated cheese (optional).
9. Use your finger to dab the outside of the circle with water. Fold pastry over the mince and use a fork to crimp the edges together.
10. Whisk egg with water and brush on pastry to glaze.
11. Place all completed patties on to a tray (or two) and cook in the oven for 20-25 minutes.

## Serving suggestions

- Great on their own, or as part of a larger picnic or lunchbox.

## SWAPS

### TIPS AND TRICKS

- Use vegetarian mince, or roughly chopped and cooked mushrooms instead of the mince.
- You can make the pastry without a food processor, though it will take a little longer. Mix the flour and butter with a wooden spoon - this is easier if your butter isn't too cold. Mix in the salt and spices and then add the water a bit at a time until it forms a dough.
- Once cooled, the patties can be placed in the freezer (with parchment paper between each so they don't stick) and kept for up to 2 months. Completely defrost them before reheating, and reheat in the microwave or oven until piping hot.

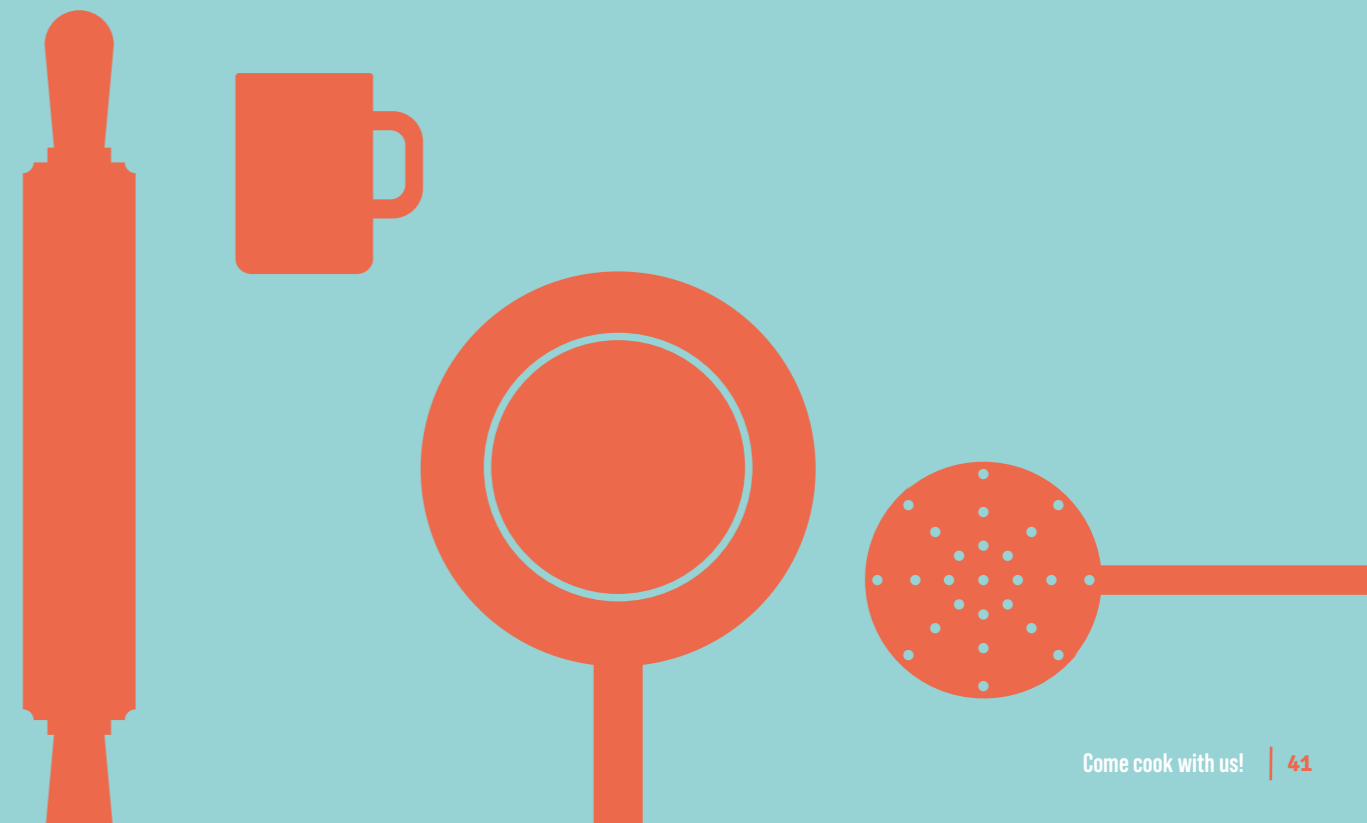




## Chapter 5 Yummy



Sides, snacks and desserts to be enjoyed by the whole family!



# Tarator



Tarator is an Albanian cold cucumber and yoghurt soup, often served on hot summer nights as a starter, or a replacement for a salad in a meal. It's similar in flavour to Raita, but uses dill instead of mint.

## Ingredients

- > 2 cups plain yoghurt
- > 1 cucumber
- > 1 teaspoon sea salt
- > 2 tablespoon fresh dill
- > 2 garlic cloves
- > 2 tablespoon oil (olive is best)
- > ¼ cup cold water
- > 1 teaspoon white vinegar

## Method

1. In a bowl, mix chopped cucumber, minced garlic, sea salt, olive oil and vinegar.
2. In a separate bowl, thin the yoghurt with cold water, not too thin, not too thick.
3. Pour the mixture from the first bowl into the yoghurt, and mix all together.
4. Serve in small bowls and drizzle olive oil on top.
5. Garnish with freshly chopped dill and put in the refrigerator for half an hour to chill.

## Serving suggestions

- It is traditional to serve this dish with feta and fresh bread, or borek and olives.
- You can also serve this as a dip with carrot, cucumber, celery or bread sticks.



# Carrot Halwa

SERVES  
4 TO 6



This recipe makes the most of carrots' natural sweetness by turning them into a pudding. It's often made in northern Indian households in winter when carrots are in season.

## Ingredients

- > 1 kg carrot
- > ¼ cup ghee
- > 3 cups milk
- > ¾ cup sugar
- > ½ cup dried full fat milk powder
- > ¼ tsp cardamom powder
- > Handful of nuts roughly chopped

## Method

1. Peel and finely grate the carrots. Keep aside.
2. In a large pan, heat ¼ cup ghee and fry nuts until they turn golden brown. Keep aside.
3. In the same ghee, add grated carrot.
4. Cook gently for 5 minutes or until it changes colour slightly.
5. Pour in 3 cups of milk and give it a good stir.
6. Boil for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
7. Continue to boil until carrots are cooked well and milk reduces.
8. Once mixture is thick, add sugar.
9. Mix well and cook until the sugar dissolves and thickens.
10. Cook until the halwa thickens and ghee releases from sides.
11. Turn off the heat and add ½ cup milk powder, ¼ tsp cardamom powder and chopped nuts.
12. Mix well making sure everything is well combined.
13. Enjoy hot or cold.

## SWAPS

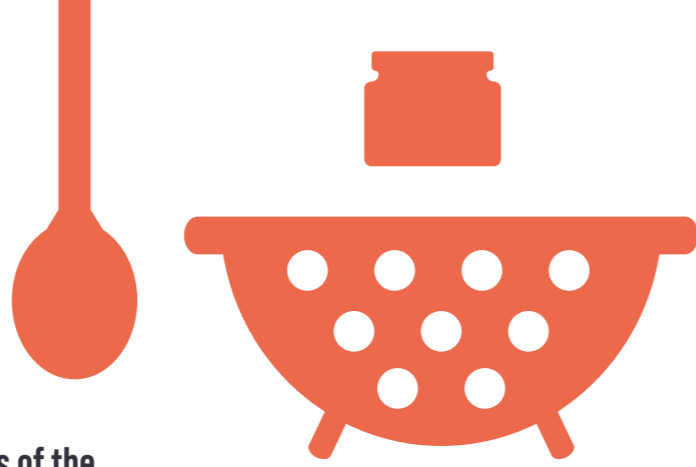
### TIPS AND TRICKS

- Any milk will work: whole dairy milk or soya milk give a creamier consistency, and almond milk gives a nutty flavour.
- Use any nuts, as long as they are unsalted.
- Add a handful of dried fruits such as raisins.



# Aloo Tikki

MAKES  
8 TO 10  
CAKES



These potato cakes are a popular snack in many parts of the Indian subcontinent. Simple, adaptable and loved by adults and kids alike!

## Ingredients

- > 5 large potatoes
- > 1 onion
- > Handful of coriander
- > ½ tablespoon salt
- > ½ squeezed lemon (fresh or juice)
- > ½ tablespoon cumin seeds
- > ½ tablespoon coriander seeds
- > ½ tablespoon chilli powder (optional)
- > 1 green chilli (optional)

## Chutney

- > 1 bunch coriander
- > 1 bunch mint
- > 2 handfuls cherry tomatoes
- > 10 green chillies
- > 3 cloves of garlic
- > ½ teaspoon salt
- > 2 tablespoon olive oil
- > 2 tablespoon balsamic or apple vinegar

## Special equipment

- > Blender

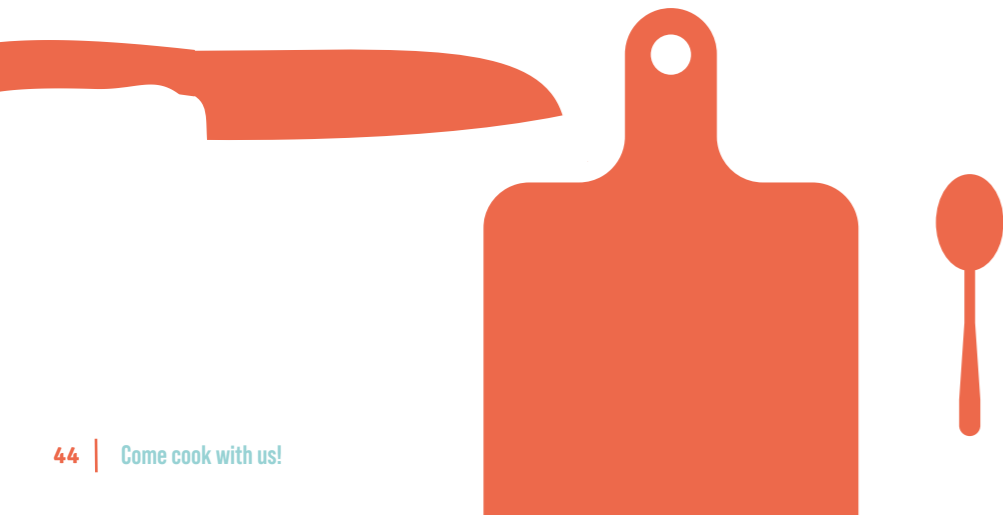
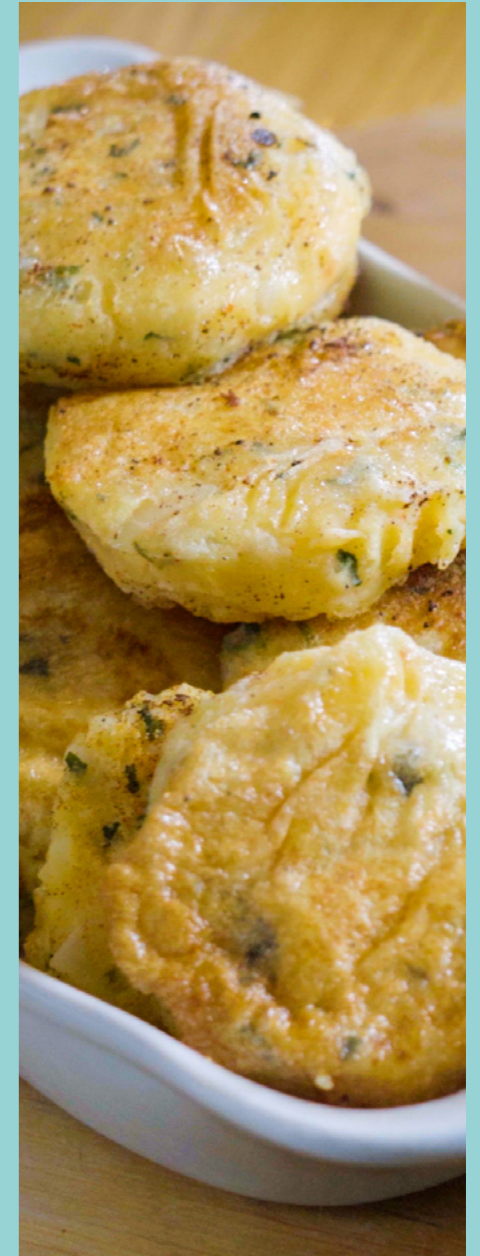
## Method

1. Peel the potatoes and cut into cubes.
2. Boil for ten minutes or until soft.
3. Chop onions, coriander and chillies (optional).
4. Drain potatoes and mash.
5. Add spices and chopped ingredients to potatoes.
6. Shape them, dip into beaten egg and fry until golden brown.
7. To make the chutney, place all the ingredients in blender and blitz until smooth.

## SWAPS

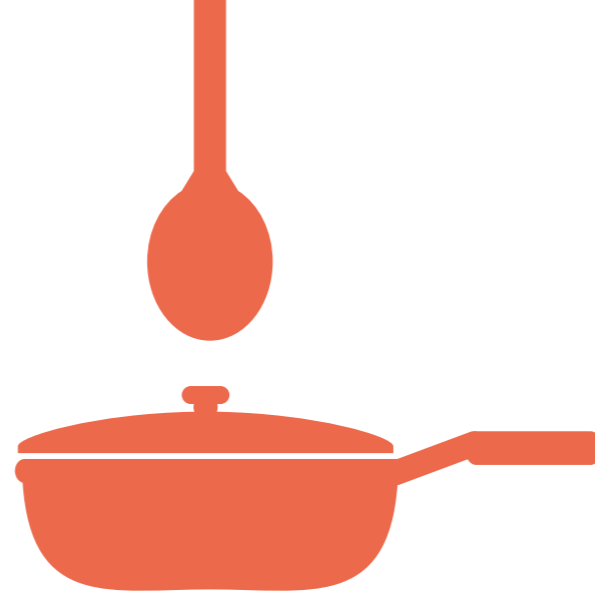
### TIPS AND TRICKS

- Sneak in some veggies – you can try spinach, courgette or whatever you have at home by either grating or chopping finely and incorporating into the mash potatoes.
- For the cheese lovers out there, add a hard cheese (grated) of your choice to the mash to switch things up.
- This recipe is great as a tea-time snack or as a side to a main meal.
- You can make the sauce without a blender. Mix the liquids together in a bowl, finely chop herbs, tomatoes, chillies and garlic and add to the liquids bowl.



# Rocky Road

This no-bake dessert is a firm favourite, as well as being super customisable. Follow your own (rocky) road with this one, and include different fillings that you enjoy.



## Ingredients

- > 200g digestive or rich tea biscuits, broken into chunks
- > 135g margarine or butter
- > 200g dark chocolate
- > 2-3 tablespoon golden syrup
- > 100 mini marshmallows or large ones chopped up

## Method

1. Line an 18cm square tin with greaseproof paper.
2. Melt margarine or butter with golden syrup over a low heat.
3. Chop chocolate into pieces and add to pan.
4. Stir while chocolate melts.
5. While chocolate has just melted add the rest of your ingredients.
6. Push into tin.
7. Put in fridge to set for 1-2 hours.
8. Cut into squares and enjoy!

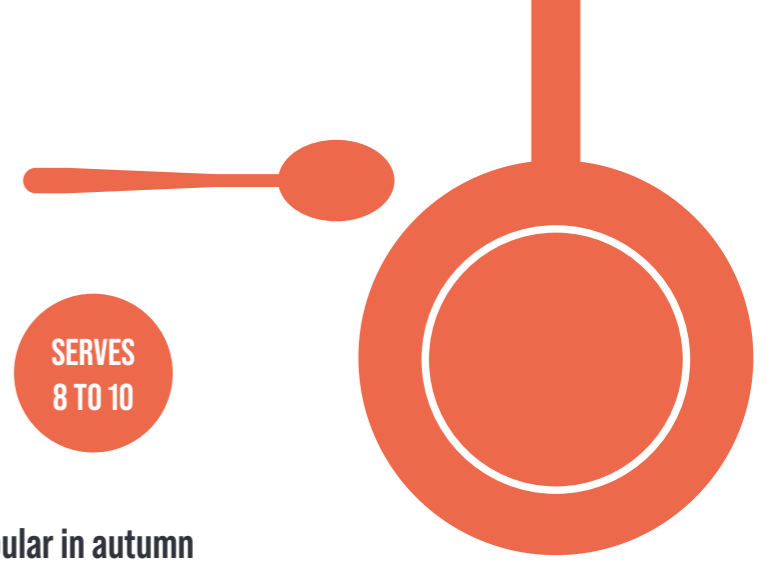
## SWAPS

### TIPS AND TRICKS

- The best part of Rocky Road is being able to add your own favourite flavours, try adding nuts, glace cherries and dried fruits to make a new and unique dessert. Need some inspiration? Why not try these flavour combinations:
  - Tropical: Add dried mango and pineapple, banana chips and sprinkle with desiccated coconut.
  - Bonfire night: Add popping candy, dried apple and toffee pieces.
  - Baklava: Add pistachios, walnuts, pecans, ground cinnamon and ground cloves.

# Polish Kompot (fruit compote)

SERVES  
8 TO 10



This is a simple dessert or breakfast that is popular in autumn and winter in Poland when fresh fruit is scarce.

## Ingredients

- > 500g dried fruits (prunes, apricots, figs, apples, peaches, pears, berries, etc.)
- > 8 cups water
- > 8 whole cloves
- > 2 cinnamon sticks
- > Lemon zest (optional)

## Method

1. Place all ingredients in a saucepan and heat gently until boiling
2. Bring to a simmer, stirring frequently
3. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, for about 20 minutes
4. Check the consistency. The fruits should be very soft and in a thick liquid. Add a bit more water if it looks dry, or simmer for longer if the liquid looks thin.
5. Let the contents of the pan cool down.
6. Transfer to a clean container and enjoy.

## Serving suggestions

- Serve on its own or with yogurt or cream, as a dessert. Also lovely on top of porridge. Will keep in the fridge for up to a week.

## SWAPS

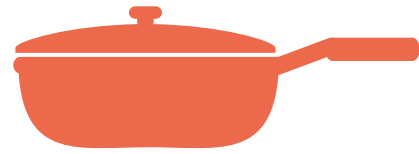
### TIPS AND TRICKS

- Any dried fruit you have will do. Can be one fruit or a combination!
- You can also try it with fresh fruit, though you may need to add a little sugar.
- If you're feeling adventurous, why not also try using different spices.



## Essential equipment

You can cook nearly everything in this book with the following basic tools:



### Saucepans

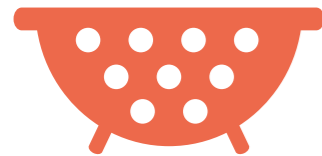
One small pan for boiling eggs, cooking pasta or preparing or reheating smaller quantities. One large pan for cooking soups, stews and sauces.



### Frying pan



### Measuring jug

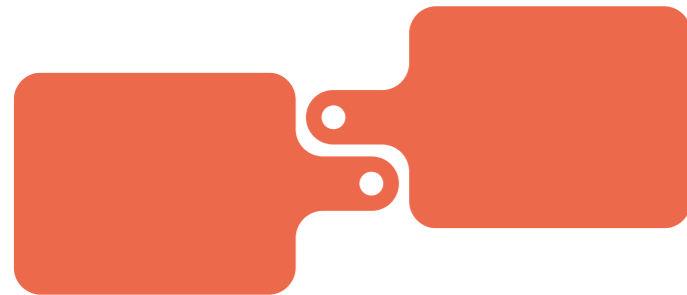


### Colander



### Mixing bowl

### Wooden spoon



### 2 chopping boards

To avoid spreading bacteria from meat and fish, it is best to use one board for chopping vegetables and another for meat and fish.

### Vegetable peeler



### Grater



Box-shaped graters are easy to use and have a selection of sized grating holes. Thick is best for vegetables for salads and cheese. Fine is good for grating garlic and ginger.



### Sharp knives for chopping

Want to learn the basics of preparing and cooking food safely? Our Adult College runs regular Food Safety courses, email [adultcollegeenquiries@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:adultcollegeenquiries@lbbd.gov.uk) to find out more.

## Cupboard heroes

When budget and time is tight, it's great to have a cupboard packed with essentials so you can rustle up a tasty, satisfying and nutritious recipe for yourself and others. It will take a little time to build, and not everything in the list below may be suitable for you. Think about what you enjoy cooking and eating, and tailor your cupboard staples (or heroes!) around that.

### Dried goods:



**Rice:** Great served alongside a curry or chilli.

**Pasta:** Great to have on hand to rustle up a quick plate of pasta, or a satisfying pasta bake.

**Lentils:** An excellent source of plant protein, can replace meat entirely or be used to bulk out meat dishes and make them last longer, use in soups and stews, salads or in dal. There's lots of different types of lentils. Green and brown lentils tend to hold their shape and add more texture to food, whereas red and yellow lentils tend to thicken and mush together.

**Quinoa, bulgur wheat, couscous, pearl barley:** Great to bulk out any salad, or served alongside stews and casseroles.

### Canned goods:



**Chopped tomatoes:** One of the most handy ingredients to have in your kitchen, you can use these to make a quick tomato pasta sauce, soups, curries, chillies and stews.

**Beans:** such as kidney beans, butter beans and cannellini beans. They're a great source of fibre and protein, and are a great replacement for meat in most dishes.

**Chickpeas:** another great way to bulk out your cooking, especially curries and stews. They can also be blended together to make a tasty houmous dip, or falafels.

**Sweetcorn:** Cheap and tasty, can be added to any stew, curry or sauce to increase the vegetable content.

**Fish e.g. tuna, sardines:** Not so cheap, but great source of protein and flavour. Good for pasta sauce or with potatoes or other veg.

### Frozen vegetables:



**e.g. peas, sweetcorn, spinach, mixed veg:** If you have access to a freezer, adding frozen vegetables will increase flavour and nutrition, and they are often cheaper than fresh vegetables. Great to have if you don't have access to fresh produce.

### Herbs and spices:



These are the true heroes in most home cooking, and take any meal from bland to bursting with flavour! Here are a couple of the most common ones to keep in your cupboard:

**Cumin:** Found in most cuisines outside of Europe, this spice adds a warmth and smokiness to dishes. It's also found in Garam Masala, a spice blend commonly used in curries.

**Paprika:** A hero in most dishes, adding a sweet peppery taste. You can also buy smoked paprika to add a smoky taste.

**Chilli powder/flakes:** add a bit of heat to your cooking, great in chillies, pasta sauces and soups.

**Cinnamon:** essential in baking and great in sweet dishes, but can also add a nice depth of flavour to savoury foods.

**Turmeric:** this bright yellow spice features a lot in Indian cuisines. Try not to spill it as it can stain.

**Curry powder:** Don't have room for all the spices you need for a curry? Most shops will sell them pre-mixed for your convenience.

### Basics:



**Stock:** Add extra flavour to any dish, good for sauces and stews.

**Salt and pepper:** Basic seasoning, use sparingly to enhance flavour.

**Oil e.g. sunflower, olive:** Use to fry, for salad dressing or in cakes and biscuits instead of butter.

**Flour e.g. wheat, chickpea, buckwheat, rye:** For bread, fritters and bakes.

**Onions and garlic:** Strong tasting and sweet when cooked fried or roasted, these are often the start of stews, curries and sauces.

## Low energy cooking tips

[www.lbbd.gov.uk/cost-living-support](http://www.lbbd.gov.uk/cost-living-support)

Home cooking is a great way of saving money and having a nutritional meal, but with energy prices rising, turning on your appliances can be daunting. Follow these handy tips to make sure you're using the least energy possible - every little helps!

If you need more support with your bills and finances, please see our Cost of Living support pages to find out what help is available to you.

### 1 Prepare

Money saving starts before the cooking begins. Make a plan of action and prep your foods before you turn your appliances on.

### 2 Defrost

Defrost your freezer regularly if it gets iced up easily. Ice prevents the freezer from running as it was designed, leading it to use more energy.

### 3 Passive cooking

Passive cooking dates back to the 19th century. Turn your oven off 10 minutes before the food is finished cooking, the remaining heat in the oven will finish cooking the food.

### 4 Keep a lid on it

Putting a lid on your pans means your food cooks quicker and can save up to 85% of the energy an uncovered pan would use.

### 5 Stackable steamers

Steaming is a great way of cooking loads of vegetables at once - with a stackable steamer, you can simultaneously boil and steam veg all on one hob ring.

### 6 Use the microwave

Most things that go in the oven can be precooked or reheated in the microwave (jacket potatoes work wonderfully like this). Just make sure reheated food is piping hot before serving.

### 7 Share the warmth

Guests and cooking generate heat for your household, meaning you can turn down the heating a bit. Arrange a weekly shared meals with friends, sharing costs, and creating a (literally) warm atmosphere.

### 8 Size matters

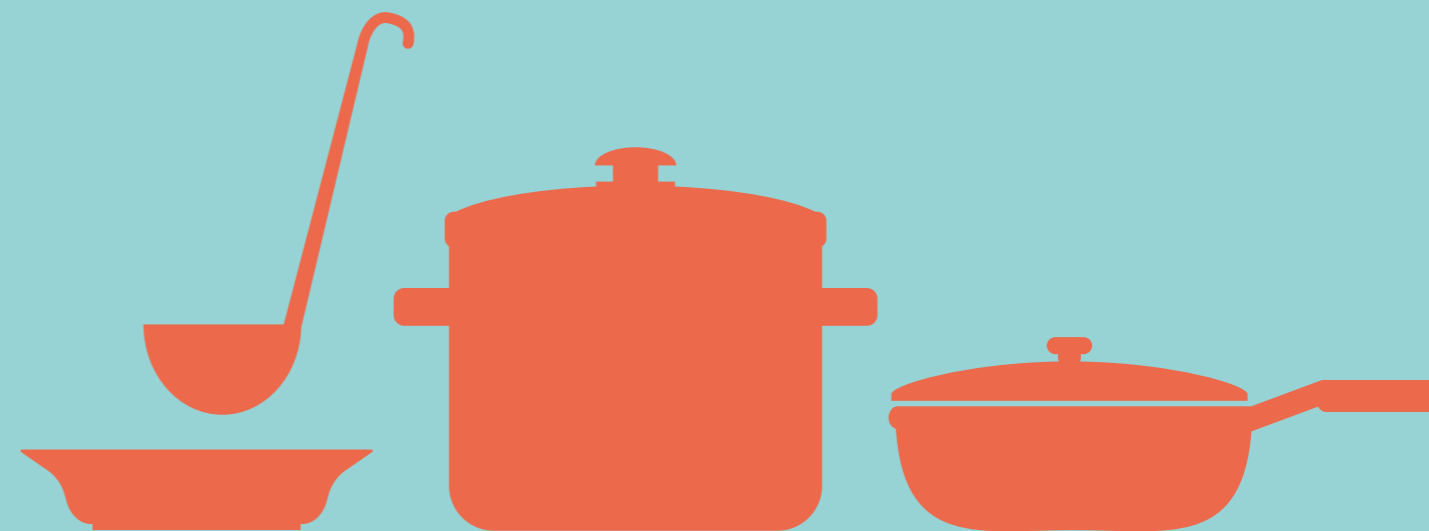
Match the pan size to the size of the hob in order to avoid heat escaping and being wasted. This can save roughly 40% of the energy that would be wasted by using a too large or small pan.

### 9 Gadgets

Some appliances are more energy efficient than using the oven, as outlined in the table. Don't have one? Look on OLIO, Nextdoor, or in your local charity shop and see if someone near you has one!

### 10 Batch it up

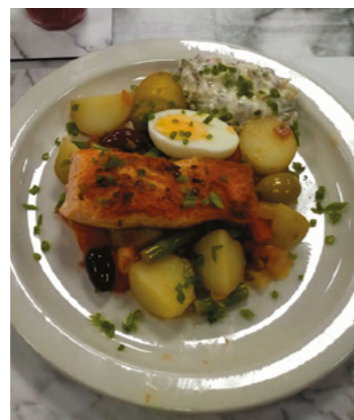
The oven is a big energy user, so it's best to make the most of it when you turn it on. Make more than you need - put the extras in the fridge or freeze them to eat when you want.



There are often multiple ways to cook a certain type of food, but some are far more efficient than others. Check the table below to see what methods are cheapest, and what ways produce the best results.

	Electric Oven	Pressure Cooker	Air Fryer	Stew Cooker	Microwave
<b>Roast chicken</b>	39p	11p	18p Best quality/ price balance	31p	n/a
<b>Chips</b>	29p	n/a	10p Cheapest and best	n/a	n/a
<b>Baking</b>	24p Best for larger bakes	26p	8p Cheapest and best	20p	n/a
<b>Soup</b>	n/a	9p Cheapest and best	n/a	31p	n/a
<b>Steamed veg</b>	n/a	7p	n/a	n/a	3p Cheapest and best
<b>Jacket potato</b>	37p	9p	13p Best quality/ price balance	51p	5p

Information sourced from [www.which.co.uk](http://www.which.co.uk)



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## Credits

Thanks to our partners for their help producing this community cookbook



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Rani and Fateha for providing the Carrot Halwa and Chilli Paneer recipes respectively.

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# Come cook with us!

**A BARKING & DAGENHAM COMMUNITY-LED RECIPE BOOK**

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Dagenham**