

Community Encounter: The Table

A potluck, reimagined

Here, everyone builds their own plate just the way they like it. Prep is simple and shared, dividing ingredients among households. Everything can be made ahead and assembled in minutes. Double it up for large gatherings, or simplify as needed.

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A note on hospitality

Hello friends,

This year we have invited our church to Know Jesus by encountering Him in seven different ways. This is our Community Encounter. We believe that inviting others to join you around your table is a sure way to strengthen friendships and build community. Sadly, somewhere along the line this became an intimidating prospect for many of us. Our heart is to reintroduce our people to the beauty that is found in sharing a meal.

We hope these recipes unite the seasoned cooks and novices alike. Above all, the food is designed to communicate value to those with whom it's shared. We're here to help change the way Grace Church thinks about hospitality, one delicious meal at a time.

- The Knowing Jesus Theme Team

GROUP OF 6



Photo by Gayle Mcleod

Crispy Tostadas

Tostada night is the ultimate low-lift, high-satisfaction dinner plan.

They’re crispy, savory, fresh, and creamy. Perfect for family-style eating, and even the pickiest of eaters.

Notes for Serving:

Set it up buffet-style so everyone can build their own tostadas.

Toppings can be served chilled or at room temp.

The crema and guac are best made day-of for maximum freshness.

Want a vegetarian version? Just use mushrooms or skip the meat and load up on beans and toppings!

01
Meat + Bean Mixture

Prep Time: 10 min
Cook Time: 10 min

2 pounds ground meat (chorizo, turkey, chicken, beef)
2 (16-ounce) cans refried beans
2 tablespoons homemade or store bought taco seasoning

Heat a large skillet over medium heat. Add the ground meat and cook, breaking it up with a wooden spoon, until browned, about 6 minutes. Add the refried beans and taco seasoning to the skillet with the meat and stir until evenly combined. Cook, stirring occasionally, until beans are warmed through, about 2 minutes. Transfer to a bowl. Keep warm or reheat on arrival.

02
Tostada Shells + Cheese

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 0 min

16 (6-inch) tostada shells
1 cup cheese (crumbled Cotija cheese or shredded Mexican style cheese)

Bring 16 shells and 1 cup of cheese. Bonus points for warming the shells.

03
Guacamole

Prep Time: 15 min
Cook Time: 0 min

3 ripe avocados
1 jalapeño pepper seeded, finely chopped
¼ cup red onion, finely chopped
½ cup cilantro leaves, chopped
2 tablespoons fresh squeezed lime juice
3 medium garlic cloves, grated
½ teaspoon freshly cracked black pepper
½ teaspoon kosher salt

Mash the avocados in a medium bowl. Fold in all other ingredients and adjust salt as needed.

04
Pico De Gallo

Prep Time: 20 min
Cook Time: 0 min

4 medium Roma tomatoes, seeded and diced
1 large white onion, diced
1 cup packed chopped fresh cilantro leaves (from about 2 bunches)
2 small jalapeños, halved, seeded, and minced
1/3 cup fresh lime juice (from about 3 limes)
1 ½ teaspoons sea salt
Pinch of chili powder or dash of hot sauce (optional)

In a medium bowl, combine the tomato, onion, cilantro, jalapeño, lime juice, cilantro, and salt. Mix well to combine. Taste and add more salt as needed, plus chili powder as desired. Allow the pico de gallo to sit at room temperature for about 15 minutes before serving. Store refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 4 days.

05
Lettuce, Lime Wedges + Lime Crema

Prep Time: 10 min
Cook Time: 0 min

½ cup sour cream
2 teaspoons fresh lime juice (from 1 lime)
½ teaspoon dried oregano
½ teaspoon ground cumin
½ teaspoon garlic powder
¼ teaspoon sea salt
1 teaspoon Mexican hot sauce, plus more to taste, such as Tapatío
1 tablespoon whole milk (optional)
3 cups shredded lettuce
3-4 limes cut into wedges

In a small bowl, whisk together the sour cream, lime juice, oregano, cumin, garlic powder, sea salt, and hot sauce until smooth.

If using, stir in the milk 1 teaspoon at a time, until the sauce reaches your desired consistency.

06
Drinks or Dessert (Optional)

Sodas, aguas frescas, or a tray of cookies will round things out nicely.

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Photo by Gayle Mcleod

Mediterranean Spread

There’s something about Mediterranean that screams abundance.

Picture generous platters, bold flavors, and a little something for everyone. It’s a mix of homemade and store-bought, thoughtfully balanced to keep prep stress low while still feeling impressive.

Notes for Serving:

Most of it tastes even better at room temperature, which makes it perfect for community group.

01
Chicken Shawarma + Sheet Pan Veggies

Main entrée; requires marinade and oven time. Most involved dish. Great for the host or a family.

Prep Time: 20 min
Cook Time: 25 min

1 cup plain Greek yogurt
2 teaspoons ground cumin
1 teaspoon ground cardamom
2 teaspoons ground turmeric
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
2 teaspoons kosher salt
2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1-inch strips
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 red onion, cut into ½-inch thick slices
2 large red bell peppers, cut into ½-inch thin strips
½ cup peppadew peppers, drained

Preheat the oven to 350°F with a rack in the center position.

Make the shawarma. In a large bowl, combine the yogurt, cumin, cardamom, turmeric, cinnamon, and salt. Add the chicken to the marinade and toss until fully coated.

Spread 1 tablespoon of olive oil onto a large rimmed sheet pan. Arrange the coated chicken, onion, bell peppers, and peppadews on the baking sheet and drizzle with the remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil. Bake for about 20 minutes, or until the chicken is cooked through and the veggies are tender. Drain off excess liquid and transfer to a large platter.

02
Rice (white or lemon herb)

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 25 min

1 cup long-grain white rice, rinsed
1/2 teaspoon sea salt
1 tablespoon butter or vegetable oil (optional)

In a medium saucepan, bring 1 1/4 cups water to a boil over medium-high heat. Stir in the rice, salt, and butter, if using, and return to a boil. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and cook until the liquid has been absorbed, 17-18 minutes.

Remove the lid and fluff the rice using a fork. Turn off the heat and let the rice sit on the hot stove for about another 5 minutes before serving.

Bring in a rice cooker insert or heatproof bowl for easy reheating.

Easy to transport and essential for a full plate.

03
Quinoa Salad

Prep Time: 20 min
Cook Time: 20 min

1 cup uncooked quinoa
1 teaspoon sea salt
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons raw apple cider vinegar
2 teaspoons sugar
1 teaspoon dried basil
1 teaspoon granulated garlic
¼ teaspoon freshly cracked black pepper
1 (15.5-ounce) can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
½ cup finely diced red onion
2 cups finely chopped Persian or English cucumber
3 Roma tomatoes or 1 large red bell pepper, seeded and chopped (about 1 cup)
1 to 2 jalapeños, seeded and minced (optional)
2 garlic cloves, minced
3 tablespoons minced fresh flat-leaf parsley

Rinse the quinoa under cold water. In a small saucepan, combine the quinoa, ½ teaspoon of the salt, and 2 cups of water, then bring to a boil over high heat. Once boiling, reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer until the water is absorbed, about 15 minutes.

Turn off the heat and allow the quinoa to steam, covered, for another 5 minutes.

Spread the cooked quinoa out on a rimmed sheet pan and let cool for 15 minutes.

Once the quinoa has cooled, in a large bowl, combine the olive oil, vinegar, sugar, basil, granulated garlic, remaining ½ teaspoon salt, and pepper. Add the cooled quinoa, chickpeas, onion, cucumber, tomatoes, garlic, parsley, and jalapeños, if using. Toss to combine.

Serve immediately or cover and chill in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour to let the flavors meld. Before serving, stir the salad. Store in an airtight container for up to 2 days.

04
Classic Creamy Hummus

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 10 min

2 (15-ounce) cans chickpeas, drained with liquid reserved
¾ cup reserved chickpea liquid, plus more if needed
2/3 cup tahini
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for serving
1/3 cup fresh lemon juice (from 4 lemons)
1 teaspoon lemon zest (from 2 lemon)
2 garlic cloves, peeled
½ teaspoon sea salt, plus more to taste

In a high powered blender, add the chickpeas, chickpea liquid, tahini, olive oil, lemon juice, lemon zest, garlic, and salt. Alternatively, remove the skins from the chickpeas and add the ingredients to a food processor.

Blend on a low speed until ingredients are mixed together. Slowly increase the speed, and blend on high until smooth and creamy, about 5 minutes. If necessary, add more reserved chickpea liquid 1 tablespoon at a time, to increase creaminess. Adjust the salt, to taste.

Use the back of a spoon to spread the hummus out into a shallow bowl, drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with parsley, paprika, and za'atar, if using.

05
Tahini Sauce + Warmed Pita Bread

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 0 min

1 cup tahini
4 garlic cloves, minced
1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
½ cup fresh lemon juice (from 3 lemons)
½ teaspoon kosher salt
Pita bread

In a medium bowl, whisk together the tahini, garlic, olive oil, lemon juice, salt, and 2/3 cup water until smooth and combined. It will look like it's separating a bit before it all comes together – just keep whisking.

06
Tzatziki Sauce

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 0 min

1 cup grated cucumber
1 cup plain Greek yogurt
1 tablespoon dried dill
1 garlic cloves, grated
2 tablespoons lemon juice (from 1 lemon)
½ teaspoon sea salt
¼ teaspoon freshly cracked black pepper
2 teaspoons Za'atar (optional)

Place the grated cucumber in the center of a clean kitchen towel. Wrap the towel around the grated cucumber and wring out its liquid over the sink.

In a small bowl, combine the yogurt, drained cucumber, dill, garlic, lemon juice, salt, pepper, and Za'atar if using.

Refrigerate for at least 1 hour before using.

07
Falafel + Sliced Cucumbers and Tomatoes

Prep time: 10 min
Cook time: 10 min

12-14 falafel
1 large English cucumber

Buy frozen falafel and crisp them up in the oven; slice and plate veggies.

08
Drinks + Dessert (optional)

Think chilled wine, sparkling water, or baklava-style cookies.

GROUP OF 6-8



Creamy Green Curry Rice

These bowls are the perfect kind of low-effort, high-flavor situation.

It’s endlessly customizable and mostly make-ahead. The green curry cashew sauce is the real hero here, so don’t skimp (and maybe double it).

Notes for Serving:

Friends can layer their bowls however they like, which makes this a crowd-pleaser even if your group includes vegetarians or picky eaters.

01
Green Curry Sauce

Prep Time: 10 min
Cook Time: 1 min

1 cup raw cashews
2 tablespoons green curry paste
1 (14-ounce) can coconut cream
1 tablespoon fresh lime juice (from 1 lime)
2 teaspoons fish sauce
1 teaspoon brown sugar, plus more to taste
½ teaspoon kosher salt

In a high-speed blender, add the cashews, curry paste, coconut cream, lime juice, fish sauce, brown sugar, and salt. Blend on high until creamy, about 1 minute.

Warm just before serving or keep at room te m p.

02
Steamed Broccoli + Mushrooms

Prep Time: 10 min
Cook Time: 5 min

3 cups broccoli florets
1 pound white mushrooms, thinly sliced

Set a steaming basket inside of a large pot, add 1-inch of water and set over medium-low heat. Add the broccoli and mushrooms to the pot. Once the water begins to steam, cover the pot with a lid, reduce the heat to low and steam until the broccoli is tender, about 5 minutes.

Season lightly with salt. Bring in a container and reheat if needed.

03
Cooked Brown Rice

Prep time: 5 min
Cook time: 50 min

1 cup brown rice, rinsed
1 teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil
½ teaspoon sea salt

In a medium saucepan, bring 2 cups water to a boil over medium-high heat. Stir in the rice, salt, and butter, if using, and return to a boil. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and cook until the liquid has been absorbed, 17-18 minutes.

Remove the lid and fluff the rice using a fork. Turn off the heat and let the rice sit on the hot stove for about another 5 minutes before serving.

Bring in a rice cooker insert or heatproof bowl for easy reheating

04
Shredded Red Cabbage + Julienned Carrots

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 0 min

3 cups shredded red cabbage
2 cups juliened carrots

Prepped and raw — slice the cabbage thin, and julienne or grate the carrots. Bring them chilled.

05
Perfect Poached Chicken

Prep Time: 10 min
Cook Time: 15 min

2 large boneless, skinless chicken breasts (about 1½ pounds)
1 tablespoons kosher salt
1 bay leaf
4 black peppercorns
1 garlic clove, smashed

Place the chicken in a large pot. Add the salt, bay leaf, peppercorns, garlic, and enough water to fully submerge the chicken.

Bring the water to a simmer over medium-high heat, then reduce the heat to low, cover, and cook until the internal

temperature of the chicken has reaches 165°F on an instant-read thermometer, about 10-15 minutes.

Remove the pot from the heat. Let the chicken rest in the liquid for 3 to 5 minutes.

Slice the chicken and serve.

Note: For a more savory flavor, you can swap in chicken stock for the water!

06
Toasted Coconut, Lime Wedges + Cilantro

Prep Time: 10 min
Cook Time: 5 min

1 cup unsweetened coconut
3 limes, cut into wedges
1 bunch cilantro

For the garnishes: chop herbs, toast the coconut lightly, and prep the lime wedges. Keep each in its own small container.

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Photo by Gayle Mcleod

Classic Soup + Salad

18

There’s something wonderfully nostalgic about a soup and salad dinner.

It’s a classic group meal for good reason — nourishing, rich, warm, and textured.

Notes for Serving:

Want to add more protein? Stir in a bit of browned Italian sausage (chicken or pork) to the soup, totally optional but totally delicious.

Just a spoonful of pesto on top of the soup or slathered on warm bread turns everything into something special.

01

Minestrone Soup

It's the heart of the meal! Make as-is or sauté some ground Italian sausage separately and stir it in at the end for a meaty option. If you want to split the load on this, have someone bring the beans, pasta, and spinach and add it once they get there.

Prep Time: 15 min
Cook Time: 35 min

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 small yellow onion, diced
2 celery ribs, diced
2 large carrots, peeled and diced
5 garlic cloves, minced
1 teaspoon fennel seeds
1 quart vegetable or chicken stock
1 cup water
1 (15-ounce) can tomato sauce
1 (15-ounce) can diced tomatoes
5 ounces green beans, trimmed and cut into 2-inch pieces (about 1 cup)
1 tablespoon Italian seasoning
1½ teaspoons kosher salt
½ teaspoon freshly cracked black pepper
1 (15.5-ounce) can cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
1 cup ditalini or other short-cut pasta
10 fresh basil leaves, minced, plus more for serving
4 cups baby spinach
Grated Parmesan cheese, for serving

Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Once the oil is glistening, add the onion, celery, and carrots. Cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 7 minutes. Add the garlic and fennel seeds and cook until fragrant, about 1 more minute.

Add the stock, water, tomato sauce, diced tomatoes and their juices, green beans, Italian seasoning, salt, and pepper. Increase the heat to high and bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to a simmer. Cook until the green beans are beginning to soften, about 10 minutes. Add the cannellini beans and pasta. Cook, stirring often for 8 more minutes, until the pasta is nearly tender.

Add the basil and spinach and cook, stirring, until the spinach is wilted and the pasta is tender, about 4 minutes.

Ladle the soup into bowls. Top with a parmesan and basil before serving.

02

Kale Salad

Prep Time: 15 min
Cook Time: 5 min

You can easily make most of this kale salad ahead of time! The lemon-parmesan dressing will keep in the fridge for a few days, and the kale can be massaged and tossed with the dressing a few hours before serving. The only thing that must happen at the last minute is the addition of the panko.

6 cups packed stemmed and roughly chopped Italian kale (2-3 bunches)
1/3 cup fresh lemon juice, plus more for kale (from 3-4 lemons)
1¼ cups freshly grated Parmesan cheese
¾ cup extra-virgin olive oil
3 garlic cloves, minced
½ teaspoon kosher salt
¼ teaspoon freshly cracked black pepper
¾ cup panko breadcrumbs
2 cups loosely packed flat-leaf parsley leaves

In a large bowl, add the chopped kale and drizzle with a squeeze of lemon juice. Using your hands, massage the kale until tender and glossy, about 3 minutes.

In a small bowl whisk together the remaining 1/3 cup lemon juice, 1 cup of the Parmesan cheese, ½ cup of the olive oil, garlic, salt, and pepper until fully combined.

In a small skillet set over medium heat, add in the remaining ¼ cup olive oil along with the panko. Using a wooden spoon or spatula, toss the panko until coated in olive oil. Cook, stirring often until the panko is a deep golden brown, about 2-4 minutes. Remove from heat and transfer to a small bowl.

In a large serving bowl, toss the kale with the parsley, dressing, and ½ of the toasted breadcrumbs. Top the salad with the

remaining ¼ cup Parmesan cheese and the remaining toasted breadcrumbs and serve.

03
Homemade Pesto

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 0 min

2 cups packed fresh basil leaves (about 2½ ounces)
1 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
¼ cup pine nuts
2 garlic cloves
½ teaspoon fine sea salt
1 cup extra-virgin olive oil

In a food processor, combine the basil, Parmesan, pine nuts, garlic, and salt. Pulse 20 times until just blended.

With the processor running on low, slowly pour in the olive oil.

Store refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 1 week, or in the freezer for up to 3 months.

04
Crusty Bread

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 0 min

Pick up a nice loaf or two — something like sourdough or ciabatta. Warm it in the oven before serving or warm at home, wrap in foil and then a towel to keep it hot.

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Cozy Bulgogi Bowls

22

This dinner is all about the fun of a customizable bowl.

Spicy, sweet, tangy, and crunchy come together over a warm bed of rice.

Notes for Serving:

Surround it with a rainbow of toppings like kimchi, crunchy cabbage, crisp cucumbers, and sprouts.

At the heart of it is bulgogi style protein — either thinly sliced, marinated beef, or umami-packed mushrooms for a vegetarian twist.

01
Bulgogi (Beef)

Recommend sharing this with 2 people, since it's the biggest lift. Choose your path: thinly sliced steak or mushrooms or both! Marinate ahead and sear right before serving.

Prep Time: 40 min
Cook Time: 40 min

4 tablespoons soy sauce or tamari
4 tablespoons honey
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1-2 tablespoons gochugaru pepper or red pepper flakes
4 garlic cloves, minced
1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil
1½ pounds top sirloin steak (or any tender prime beef cut),
1 small sweet onion, very thinly sliced
Vegetable oil for brushing
6 green onions, finely chopped
4 cups cooked rice, for serving
1½ cups kimchi
1½ cups shredded red cabbage
1½ cups sliced Persian cucumbers
1 cup bean sprouts
Sriracha, for serving (optional)

In a small bowl, combine the soy sauce, honey, sugar, pepper flakes, garlic, and sesame oil. In a 9x13 baking dish, arrange the steak in a single layer and evenly top with the sliced onions. Pour the sauce over top and marinate for at least 2 hours or up to overnight in the refrigerator.

Heat a large cast iron skillet on high heat. Once smoking, brush with oil. Remove the steak and onions from the marinade, allowing any excess to drip off. Working in batches, add to the skillet in a single layer and cook until beef is cooked through and lightly charred, 2 minutes per side. Transfer to a serving platter and sprinkle with the green onions.

Divide the rice among 6 bowls. Layer the steak, kimchi, cabbage, cucumbers, and sprouts on top of the rice; drizzle with the sriracha if using.

Bulgogi (Mushroom)

Prep Time: 40 min
Cook Time: 40 min

4 tablespoons soy sauce or tamari
4 tablespoons honey
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1-2 tablespoons gochugaru pepper or red pepper flakes
4 garlic cloves, minced
1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil
3 pounds thinly sliced mushrooms
1 small sweet onion, very thinly sliced
Vegetable oil for brushing
6 green onions, finely chopped
4 cups cooked rice, for serving

In a small bowl, combine the soy sauce, honey, sugar, pepper flakes, garlic, and sesame oil. In a 9x13 baking dish, arrange the mushrooms in a single layer and evenly top with the sliced onions. Pour the sauce over top and marinate for at least 2 hours or up to overnight in the refrigerator.

Heat a large cast iron skillet on high heat. Once smoking, brush with oil. Remove the mushrooms and onions from the marinade, allowing any excess to drip off. Working in batches, add to the skillet in a single layer and cook until mushrooms are tender and lightly charred, 2 minutes per side. Transfer to a serving platter and sprinkle with the green onions.

02
White Rice

Prep time: 5 min
Cook time: 25 min

1 cup long-grain white rice, rinsed
1/2 teaspoon sea salt
1 tablespoon butter or vegetable oil (optional)

In a medium saucepan, bring 1 1/4 cups water to a boil over medium-high heat. Stir in the rice, salt, and butter, if using, and return to a boil. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and cook until the liquid has been absorbed, 17-18 minutes.

Remove the lid and fluff the rice using a fork. Turn off the heat and let the rice

sit on the hot stove for about another 5 minutes before serving.

Bring in a rice cooker insert or heatproof bowl for easy reheating.

Easy to transport and essential for a full plate.

03
Kimchi + Sriracha

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 0 min

1 jar kimchi
1 bottle sriracha

Store-bought kimchi is perfect — just bring a jar and a bottle of sriracha. Chill until serving.

04
Shredded Red Cabbage + Sliced Cucumbers

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 0 min

1 small head red cabbage
1 large English cucumber

Veggie toppings can be prepped a few hours ahead. Slice thin for maximum crunch.

05
Bean Sprouts + Chopped Green Onions

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 0 min

2-3 cups bean sprouts
1 bunch green onions

For the garnishes: bean sprouts can be lightly blanched or served raw, and green onions bring the flavor pop.

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Photo by Gayle Mcleod

Bolognese, Two Ways

Dive into a pasta night with options for every eater at the table.

Whether you lean into the plant-powered richness of the Walnut + Lentil Bolognese or go for the fast-and-meaty comfort of the Easy Bolognese, everyone gets a bowl tailored to their mood.

Notes for Serving:

Add grilled chicken or salami to transform the side salad into a main dish.

01

Walnut + Lentil Bolognese

Prep Time: 30 min
Cook Time: 55 min

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 cup grated carrots, (from about 3 medium carrots)
1 cup minced celery, (from about 3 ribs)
1 cup finely minced yellow onion (from 1 medium onion)
6 garlic cloves, minced
1 cup walnuts, finely chopped
1 cup dried brown or green lentils, rinsed
1 quart vegetable stock or broth
1 (24-ounce) jar marinara sauce
1 cup red wine, such as Pinot Noir
2 teaspoons garlic powder
2 teaspoons Italian seasoning
2 teaspoons freshly cracked black pepper
1 teaspoon sea salt, plus more to taste
1 pound cooked pappardelle or tagliatelle, for serving
Freshly grated Parmesan cheese, for serving (optional)

Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Once the oil is glistening, add the carrots, celery, and onion and cook, stirring, until softened, about 6 minutes. Add the garlic and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute more.

Stir in the walnuts, lentils, stock, marinara, wine, garlic powder, Italian seasoning, pepper, and salt, then bring the mixture to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to medium-low and cook, stirring occasionally, until the sauce is thickened and the lentils are tender, about 35 minutes.

Transfer 2 cups of the sauce to the base of a blender, let cool briefly, and blend until nearly smooth. Return the sauce to the pan and stir to combine. (Alternatively, use an immersion blender to blend the sauce to your desired consistency directly in the pan; it should still have some texture to it.) Taste and season with salt as needed.

Divide the cooked pasta between bowls and top with the bolognese. Top with parmesan, if using, and serve.

02

Easy Bolognese

Prep Time: 10 min
Cook Time: 45 min

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 medium carrot, grated
3 ribs celery, minced
1 medium yellow onion, finely minced
1 pound 80/20 ground beef
1 pound ground pork
1 (24-ounce) jar store-bought marinara
1 teaspoon kosher salt
½ teaspoon freshly cracked black pepper
½ cup heavy cream
1 pound wide noodles, such as pappardelle or tagliatelle, cooked, for serving
Freshly grated parmesan cheese, for serving

Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Once the oil is glistening, add the carrots, celery, and onion and cook, stirring, until just tender, about 4 minutes. Add the ground beef and ground pork and cook, breaking up the meat with a spoon, until the meat is browned, about 8 minutes.

Stir in the marinara sauce, salt, and pepper and simmer, stirring occasionally, for about 30 minutes, or until the sauce thickens. Stir in the heavy cream and remove from heat.

Serve the bolognese over the cooked pasta and sprinkle with the Parmesan.

03

Pasta

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 8 min

2 lb cooked pappardelle/tagliatelle
Olive oil

Cook the pasta according to package instructions and toss in olive oil once cooled to prevent sticking.

04
Italian Salad + Dressing

Prep Time: 10 min
Cook Time: 5 min

2 Romaine hearts, roughly chopped
½ medium red onion, thinly sliced
½ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese, plus more for serving
1 cup peperoncini, whole or sliced, drained

½ cup black olives, whole or sliced
1 pint cherry tomatoes
Freshly cracked black pepper, to taste
2 cups croutons, store bought or homemade

1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 teaspoon dried basil
½ teaspoon sea salt
½ cup extra virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar

Make the dressing. In a jar with a tight fitting lid, combine the garlic powder, oregano, basil, salt, olive oil, and red wine vinegar. Shake vigorously until emulsified.

Make the salad. In a large salad bowl, combine the Romaine, red onion, Parmesan, peperoncini, olives, and tomatoes. Season to taste with pepper. Drizzle with the dressing and toss until fully coated. Top with additional parmesan cheese if desired.

Notes:
For a milder onion flavor, soak the sliced red onions in cold water for 10 minutes, then drain and pat dry before adding to the salad.

The dressing can be made up to a week in advance and stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

05
Crusty Bread + Olive Oil or Butter

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 0 min

2 loaves crusty bread
1/2 cup olive oil or butter

Warm it up if you can for extra comfort.

06
Parmesan Cheese + Drinks

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 0 min

Grated cheese is optional but delightful; drinks help balance the meal.

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Photo by Gayle Mcleod

Red Thai Curry

30

Tender chicken, butternut squash, and green beans make this meal hearty without being heavy.

Naturally gluten-free, dairy-free, and shockingly fast — just 20 minutes of cook time.

Notes for Serving:

Easily make it vegetarian by skipping the chickens and using vegetable stock in its place.

Garnish with basil and chili for those who like it hot.

01
Red Curry Base + Chicken + Veggies

Prep Time: 15 min
Cook Time: 20 min

2 tablespoons avocado oil
4 tablespoons red curry paste (we like Mae Ploy)
3 garlic cloves, grated
1 tablespoon grated peeled fresh ginger
1 (2-inch) piece lemongrass, finely chopped
1 cup chicken stock
1 (13.5 ounce) can full-fat coconut milk, shaken
1 teaspoon sugar (optional)
2 teaspoons fish sauce
1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lime juice (from 1 lime)
½ teaspoon kosher salt
1½ cups cubed butternut squash (about ½ pound)
1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breasts, thinly sliced against the grain 1 red bell pepper, seeded and thinly sliced
1 cup green beans, trimmed and cut into 2-inch pieces
½ cup thai basil leaves, plus more for serving
Cooked jasmine rice, for serving
Thinly sliced Thai chilis for serving (optional)

Heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Once the oil is glistening, add the curry paste, garlic, ginger, and lemongrass. Cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 2 minutes.

Stir in the chicken stock, coconut milk, sugar, fish sauce, lime juice, and salt. Bring to a simmer, then add the butternut squash. Cook until almost tender, about 8 minutes. Add the chicken, bell pepper, green beans, and basil. Return to a simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are tender and chicken is cooked through, about 8 minutes more.

Serve the curry over the rice and garnish with basil and chiles, if desired.

Notes:
Mae Ploy curry paste packs heat; start with 2 tablespoons for a milder version, and work up to 4 for a proper kick.

Curry can be made up to a day ahead and gently reheated.

Vegetarian? Swap chicken for tofu or chickpeas, and use veggie broth instead of chicken stock.

Not a fan of squash? Sweet potato works beautifully too.

02
Jasmine Rice

Prep time: 5 min
Cook time: 25 min

1 cup long-grain white rice, rinsed
1/2 teaspoon sea salt
1 tablespoon butter or vegetable oil (optional)

In a medium saucepan, bring 1 1/4 cups water to a boil over medium-high heat. Stir in the rice, salt, and butter, if using, and return to a boil. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and cook until the liquid has been absorbed, 17-18 minutes.

Remove the lid and fluff the rice using a fork. Turn off the heat and let the rice sit on the hot stove for about another 5 minutes before serving.

03
Cucumber Salad

Prep Time: 20 min
Cook Time: 0 min

½ cup seasoned rice vinegar
1/3 cup granulated sugar
½ teaspoon sea salt
1 teaspoon red pepper flakes
2 tablespoons toasted sesame oil
4 green onions, white and green parts, thinly sliced

3 large cucumbers, peeled, seeded, halved, and sliced (about 1¾ pounds)

In a large bowl, combine the vinegar, sugar, salt, red pepper flakes, sesame oil and green onions.

Add the cucumbers to the bowl and toss with the dressing. Allow the salad to rest for 10 minutes before serving.

04
Fresh Thai Basil, Sliced Thai Chiles + Lime Wedges

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 0 min

10-12 fresh basil leaves, thinly sliced
4-5 thai chilis, thinly sliced
3 limes, cut into wedges

Basil can be picked ahead of time; prep the chiles and limes just before serving. Bring small dishes for garnishing.

05
Fish Sauce, Salt + Serving Utensils

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 0 min

Have a few condiments on hand for final seasoning tweaks. Bring ladles or large spoons for easy serving.

06
Sparkling Water or Thai Iced Tea

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 0 min

Anything cold and refreshing to cool the heat and complete the meal.

GROUP OF 6



Photo by Gayle Mcleod

Skillet Enchiladas

34

Two one-pan wonders everyone will love.

Ideal for sharing, this dinner lets everyone choose their favorite (or enjoy both), and making one of each ensures both comfort-food lovers and veggie-forward diners feel at home.

Notes for Serving:

Bake both skillets just before guests arrive for perfectly melty cheese and warm tortillas.

Set up a buffet-style table so everyone can scoop their favorite skillet and add toppings as they like.

These one-pot meals are naturally kid-friendly and gluten-free, and the vegetarian version is meatless but still rich with veggie flavor.

01
Chicken Enchilada Skillet

Prep Time: 15 min
Cook Time: 35 min

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil or vegetable oil
1 small yellow onion, diced
4 cups cooked shredded chicken
1 tablespoon taco seasoning, homemade or store bought
1 (4-ounce) can diced green chilis, mild
1 (19-ounce) can red enchilada sauce, mild
8 (6-inch) corn tortillas, cut into 1 x 3 inch strips
2 cups shredded Mexican blend cheese

Preheat the oven to 350°F with a rack fitted in the center of the oven.

In a large oven-proof skillet, set over medium heat, heat the olive oil until glistening. Add in the onions and cook until translucent, about 5 minutes.

Add chicken, taco seasoning, green chilis, and enchilada sauce to the skillet, stir to combine. Add the tortilla strips. Bring the mixture to a boil over high heat, then reduce and allow to simmer until the tortilla strips are softened, about 2 minutes. Try to separate the tortilla strips as best as possible. Turn off the heat.

Top with cheese and bake on the center rack until the cheese is melted and the sauce is bubbling, about 25 minutes.

Top with cilantro and sour cream if desired.

02
Vegetarian Enchilada Skillet

Prep Time: 15 min
Cook Time: 50 min

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 medium zucchini, cut into ½-inch-thick rounds
1 medium yellow squash, cut into ½-inch-thick rounds
2 tablespoons Taco Seasoning
1 small yellow onion, diced
8 ounces cremini or white button mushrooms, ends trimmed, quartered
1 (4-ounce) can diced mild green chilis, drained
2 cups mild red enchilada sauce
8 (6-inch) corn tortillas, cut into 1.5 x 3-inch strips
1¼ cups shredded Mexican-style four cheese blend

Preheat the oven to 350°F with a rack in the center position.

In a large bowl, toss the zucchini and yellow squash with 1 tablespoon of the olive oil and 1 tablespoon of the taco seasoning until fully coated. Heat 1 tablespoon of the olive oil in a large ovenproof skillet over medium heat. Once the oil is glistening, working in batches if needed, add the zucchini and squash in a single layer and cook flipping every 1 to 2 minutes until golden brown on both sides, 3 to 4 minutes total. Transfer the browned zucchini to a plate.

Add the remaining 1 tablespoon oil to the same skillet along with the onion and the mushrooms. Cook, stirring occasionally, until softened 5 to 8 minutes.

Stir in the remaining 1 tablespoon taco seasoning, green chilies, and enchilada sauce. Bring to a boil over high heat then reduce the heat to medium-low. Add the tortilla strips and cook, stirring often, until soft, about 2 minutes. Separate the tortillas as best as you can.

Remove from the heat and stir in the cooked squash. Spread the mixture evenly in the skillet and top with cheese. Bake for 25 minutes, or until the cheese is melted and bubbly.

Top with cilantro and serve family style, with sour cream, and lime wedges, if desired.

03
Refried Beans

Prep Time: 4 hrs
Cook Time: 70 min

Stove-Top Method:
Place the beans in a large bowl and cover with 2 inches of water. Soak the beans for 4 to 12 hours, then drain and rinse.

Add the beans, onion, and 1 teaspoon of the salt to a large pot. Add enough water to cover the beans by 2 inches. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to low, cover and simmer, stirring occasionally, until tender, about 1 hour. Reserve 1 cup of the liquid and drain the beans, then discard the onion.

Add the lard to a large skillet over medium heat. Once the lard is glistening, add the garlic and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add the drained beans, taco seasoning, and ¼ cup of the reserved bean water.

Cook, stirring often, gently mashing the beans with a potato masher or fork, until smooth. Add more reserved bean water 2 tablespoons at a time as necessary. Taste and season with the remaining ½ teaspoon salt, if needed. Top with shredded cheese if using.

Instant Pot Method (no soak)
To a 6-quart (or larger) Instant Pot, add the beans, onion, 1 teaspoon of the salt, and 6 cups of water.

With the vent in the sealed position, cook the beans on high pressure for 45 minutes. Allow the pressure to naturally release for 25 minutes, then manually release remaining pressure. Reserve 1 cup of the liquid and drain the beans, then discard the onion.

Set the Instant Pot to sauté mode and add the lard. Once the lard is glistening, add the garlic and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add the beans, taco seasoning, and ¼ cup of the reserved bean water. Cook, stirring often, gently mashing the beans with a potato masher or fork, until smooth. Add more reserved bean water 2 tablespoons at a time as necessary. Taste and season with the remaining ½ teaspoon salt, if needed. Top with shredded cheese if using.

Slow Cooker Method (no soak):
To a 6-quart slow cooker, add the beans, onion, 1 teaspoon of the salt, and garlic. Add enough water to cover the beans by 2 inches.

Cook on HIGH for 6 hours or on LOW for 10 hours. Reserve 1 cup of the liquid and drain the beans, then discard the onion.

Add the lard to a large skillet over medium heat. Once the lard is glistening,add the drained beans, taco seasoning, and ¼ cup of the reserved bean water. Cook, stirring often, gently mashing the beans with a potato masher or fork, until smooth. Add additional bean water 2 tablespoons at a time if necessary. Taste and season with remaining ½ teaspoon salt, if needed. Top with shredded cheese if using.

04
Spanish Rice

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 30 min

3 tablespoons Vegetable oil
2 cups Long grain rice, rinsed
1/2 cup Carrots, 1/8 inch cubes
2 cups Stock (chicken or vegetable)
1 tablespoon better than bouillon, chicken or vegetable
1 cup Tomato sauce
1/2 teaspoon Sea salt
1 tablespoon homemade taco seasoning or 2 teaspoons store bought

In a medium sized non-stick pot heat vegetable oil over medium high heat until glistening. Add in rice and cook, stirring often, until rice is golden brown, about 7-8 minutes.

Add in carrots along with stock, tomato sauce, sea salt, and taco seasoning. Stir to combine. Bring to a rapid boil, reduce to a simmer and cover. Cook rice for 20 minutes undisturbed until rice is tender. Remove from heat and uncover. Fluff with a fork, cover and allow to sit for 5 more minutes.

05
Cilantro, Lime Wedges, Hot Sauce + Sour Cream

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 0 min

1 bunch cilantro
3 limes, cut into wedges
hot sauce
1 tub sour cream

Prep and pack in separate containers for easy serving.

06
Guacamole, Salsa + Chips

Prep Time: 15 min
Cook Time: 0 min

3ripe avocados
1jalapeño pepper seeded, finely chopped
¼cup red onion, finely chopped
½cup cilantro leaves, chopped
2tablespoons fresh squeezed lime juice
3medium garlic cloves, grated
½teaspoon freshly cracked black pepper
½teaspoon kosher salt
1bunch cilantro
3limes, cut into wedges
Hot sauce
1 tub sour cream

For the guacamole, homemade or store-bought works! If homemade, mash those avocados and add lime, garlic, cilantro, and jalapeño.

Pick up some chips and salsa to complete the side.

GROUP OF 6



Photo by Gayle Mcleod

Roast Chicken

39

Few things feel as celebratory, or as comforting, as pulling a golden roast chicken out of the oven.

Serve it family-style and you've got something that feels both simple and special — the perfect balance of indulgent and fresh.

Notes for Serving:

You might want to make two chickens depending on the size of your group.

01
Whole Roast Chicken

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 60-75 min

1 (3½-to 5-pound) whole chicken
2 tablespoons kosher salt

Preheat the oven to 375°F with a rack in the center position.

Pat the chicken completely dry inside and out. Set the chicken, breast side up, in a large ovenproof skillet or roasting dish. If desired, tie the legs together with kitchen string and tuck the wing tips under the body of the chicken.

Season the chicken all over, inside and out, with the salt.

Roast the chicken for 15 minutes per pound. Begin checking for doneness when 20 minutes remain (see Note).

Allow the chicken to rest for 15 minutes. Carve and serve with your desired sauces alongside.

Note: As a good rule of thumb, chickens roast at 375°F for 15 minutes per pound. If your bird is bigger or smaller than what a recipe calls for, you can just do the math! A chicken is always done cooking when the internal temperature taken at the thickest part of the thigh reaches 165°F on an instant-read thermometer, and the juices run clear.

02
Buttermilk Ranch Dressing, Chimichurri + Romesco Sauce

Buttermilk Ranch Dressing

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 0 min

½ cup buttermilk
½ cup mayonnaise
½ cup sour cream
2 teaspoons minced fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves or 1 teaspoon dried parsley
1 teaspoon onion powder
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon dried dill
½ teaspoon fine sea salt

In a small bowl, whisk together the buttermilk, mayonnaise, sour cream, parsley, onion powder, garlic powder, dill, and salt until smooth. Store refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks.

Chimichurri

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 0 min

1 small shallot, cut into wedges
¾ cup fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves
2 garlic cloves
1 tablespoon fresh oregano leaves
1½ teaspoons kosher salt
1 teaspoon freshly cracked black pepper
¾ cup extra-virgin olive oil
¼ cup red wine vinegar
½ teaspoon red pepper flakes

Add the shallot, parsley, garlic, oregano, salt, and pepper to a food processor. Pulse until well combined, but still slightly chunky.

Transfer the mixture to a small bowl. Add the oil, vinegar, and red pepper flakes. Stir to combine. Store refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks.

Romesco Sauce

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 0 min

1 (14-ounce) can fire-roasted tomatoes, drained
1 (12-ounce) jar roasted red peppers, drained
¾ cup blanched almonds
¼ cup pine nuts (see Note)
¼ cup fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
3 garlic cloves, smashed
2 tablespoons sherry vinegar
1 teaspoon smoked paprika
1 teaspoon fine sea salt

In a blender or food processor, combine

the tomatoes, red peppers, almonds, pine nuts, parsley, olive oil, garlic, vinegar, paprika, and salt. Blend until your desired consistency is reached, about 1 minute. Store refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks.

03
Classic Mashed Potatoes

Prep Time: 15 min
Cook Time: 15 min

3½ pounds russet potatoes, peeled and cut into 2-inch cubes
4 teaspoons sea salt
1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
2/3 cup whole milk
¾ teaspoon garlic powder

Fill a large pot with 4 quarts of water and season with 3 teaspoons of the salt. Add the potatoes and bring to a boil over high heat. Cook until just fork tender, about 15 minutes. Drain.

In the same pot, combine the butter and milk over medium-low heat. Cook, stirring, until the butter is melted, about 2 minutes. Using a potato ricer, rice the potatoes over the hot butter mixture. (Alternatively, mash the potatoes directly into the liquid, taking care not to overwork them.) Season with the garlic powder and the remaining 1 teaspoon salt. Adjust the seasoning to taste.

04
Garlic Green Beans

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 10 min

1 pound green beans, trimmed
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil or butter
3 to 4 garlic cloves, minced
½ teaspoon kosher salt
¼ teaspoon freshly cracked black pepper, plus more to taste

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil over high heat. Add the green beans and cook until slightly tender and bright green, about 3 minutes. Drain and rinse under cold water for about 2 minutes.

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Once the oil is glistening, add the drained green beans and garlic and cook, stirring often, until the garlic is golden brown, about 2 minutes. Season with the salt and pepper and cook, stirring, about 1 minute more.

05
Butter Lettuce Salad + Apple Cider Vinaigrette

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 10 min

Salad

2 tablespoons salted butter
½ cup panko breadcrumbs
2 heads butter lettuce, leaves separated and roughly torn
2 ounces Manchego cheese, grated
1 cup pitted Castelvetrano olives, halved
¼ cup minced chives
Freshly cracked black pepper, to taste

Vinaigrette

¼ cup unfiltered apple cider vinegar
2 tablespoons honey
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
¼ teaspoon fine sea salt
¼ teaspoon freshly cracked black pepper

Make the vinaigrette. In a small bowl, whisk together the vinegar, honey, olive oil, salt, and pepper until smooth. Set aside.

Toast the breadcrumbs. Melt the butter in a small skillet over medium heat. Once the butter is bubbling, add the panko and cook, stirring frequently, until golden brown and crispy, 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer to a plate and let cool slightly.

Arrange the lettuce leaves on a large serving platter. Scatter the Manchego, olives, and chives over the top. Season with freshly cracked black pepper.

Just before serving, drizzle the vinaigrette over the salad and immediately top

with the toasted breadcrumbs. Serve family-style.

Note: If you dress this salad too soon, the breadcrumbs will get soggy. We recommend saving the panko until after it is dressed, sprinkling it on right before serving.

06
Crusty Bread + Butter

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 0 min

2 loaves crusty bread
1 stick salted butter

Pick up a nice loaf or two — something like sourdough or ciabatta. Warm it in the oven before serving or warm at home, wrap in foil and then a towel to keep it hot.

GROUP OF 6



Photo by Gayle Mcleod

Ramen Bar

44

This easy chicken ramen bar skips the long simmer and instead leans on fragrant garlic, ginger, and a quick scallion-chili oil for punchy flavor. Perfect for a hands-on dinner where each bowl can be tailored to taste.

Notes for Serving:

You might want to make a double batch depending on the size of your group.

01
Easy Ramen Soup Broth

Prep Time: 15 min
Cook Time: 15 min

1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil
4 garlic cloves, minced
2 tablespoons minced peeled fresh ginger
6 cups chicken stock
3 tablespoons soy sauce
4 scallions, white and green parts, chopped
4 ounces shiitake mushrooms, sliced
½ teaspoon sea salt

Add the sesame oil to a large saucepan over medium heat. Once the oil is glistening, add the garlic and ginger and cook, stirring, until fragrant, 1 minute.

Add the chicken stock, soy sauce, scallions, mushrooms, and salt and bring to a boil over high heat for 15 minutes. Keep warm until ready to serve.

02
Perfect Poached Chicken

Prep Time: 10 min
Cook Time: 15 min

2 large boneless, skinless chicken breasts (about 1½ pounds)
1 tablespoons kosher salt
1 bay leaf
4 black peppercorns
1 garlic clove, smashed

Place the chicken in a large pot. Add the salt, bay leaf, peppercorns, garlic, and enough water to fully submerge the chicken.

Bring the water to a simmer over medium-high heat, then reduce the heat to low, cover, and cook until the internal temperature of the chicken has reaches 165°F on an instant-read thermometer, about 10-15 minutes.

Remove the pot from the heat. Let the chicken rest in the liquid for 3 to 5 minutes.

Slice the chicken and serve.

Note: For a more savory flavor, you can swap in chicken stock for the water!

03
Scallion Chili Sesame Oil

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 0 min

½ cup tosted sesame oil
2 tablespoons chili paste, we like sambal oelek
8 scallions, white and green parts chopped

Make the scallion chili sesame oil. In a small bowl, combine the sesame oil, chili paste, and scallions.

04
Six-Minute Eggs

Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 6 min

6 large eggs

Place a folded kitchen towel in the bottom of a large pot. Fill the pot two thirds of the way with water, place over high heat, and bring to a boil. Once your water starts to boil, use a slotted spoon to lower the eggs, one at a time, into the water. Cook the eggs for 6 minutes 30 seconds.

While the eggs are boiling, fill a medium bowl with ice water.

As soon as the timer goes off, using a slotted spoon, transfer the eggs to the ice bath. Let sit for 5 minutes to stop the cooking. Drain.

Carefully tap around the rounded bottom end of the egg to crack it open. Peel and use the eggs as desired. Store refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 2 days.

05
Noodles

Prep Time: 0 min
Cook Time: 5 min

Cook 3-4 ramen packs according to the package instructions and discard seasoning packets.

Bring separately, tossed lightly with sesame oil to prevent sticking.

06
Toppings

Extra Scallions
Sesame Seeds
Hot Sauce
1 bunch green onions

Pre-chop scallions, green onions, and pack sesame seeds.

Bring optional greens like bok choy or spinach.