



Savor the Season: Spring 2025

Favorite Seasonal Recipes from The Olive Oil Hunter





A Message from T. J.

“Spring forward” is right! Just like the first daffodils and tulips emerging from the ground, farmers’ markets are starting to come back to life after the cold winter months. Delicacies like asparagus, peas, morels, and strawberries are making an appearance and reinvigorating our urge to get busy in the kitchen.

I’m thrilled to present you with my fourth seasonal e-cookbook, this one dedicated to springtime delights. Within its pages, you’ll discover 33 recipes that not only take advantage of local bounty but also highlight how olive oil can enhance every cuisine. In addition to well-known dishes from Mediterranean countries like Italy and France, you’ll find Chinese and Korean favorites as well as American classics—sweets included.

In the *Pressing Reports* and weekly newsletters from The Fresh-Pressed Olive Oil Club, we often share the latest research about the health benefits of extra virgin olive oil, from enhanced heart health to better cognition. My e-books are a way to showcase just how delicious healthy foods and healthy preparations are. We also try to touch on the other advantages of a Mediterranean, or olive oil-centric, way of life—the social component that offers benefits for the soul and the psyche. In that vein, I encourage you to gather loved ones around your table and savor these dishes together—you’ll enjoy them all the more when you share them with friends and family.

Happy drizzling!

T. J. Robinson
The Olive Oil Hunter®



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—*TV star chef, Chris Kimball*

“I now get most of my oil from T. J. Robinson’s Fresh-Pressed Olive Oil Club, and every time I open a bottle, my kitchen literally fills up with the smell of fresh crushed olive—the scent explodes out of the bottle. Just breaking the seal transports me to Italy or Spain or Chile.”

—*Larry Olmsted, award-winning food and travel journalist, describing these oils in his New York Times bestselling book, Real Food/Fake Food*

“Even if you buy the most expensive olive oils in the best stores in Manhattan, you can’t get your hands on olive oil of this quality!”

—*Ken McCarthy, Tivoli, NY*



T. J. Robinson, aka “**The Olive Oil Hunter®**,” is one of the world’s most respected authorities on all matters of olive oil. He is one of the few Americans invited to serve as a judge in prestigious Italian olive oil tasting competitions. When it comes to evaluating olive oils, he has been described as having a “platinum palate.”

For more information, plus the best way to store any olive oil, please click here...



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Strawberry Scones

A spring take on a British bake

Pastry flour and olive oil come together to create an amazingly tender scone. With the sweet tang of the berries, there's no need to gild the lily with icing, though you might be tempted to serve them with sweet butter and honey or the British way, with clotted cream and jam.

2-1/4 cups pastry flour, plus more
for shaping the dough

1/3 cup sugar

1 tablespoon baking powder

1 teaspoon coarse sea salt

1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil

2/3 cup half and half

1 extra-large egg

1 teaspoon vanilla

8 ounces fresh strawberries, hulled
and cut into large dice

- **Preheat your oven** to 400°F. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper and sprinkle it liberally with flour.

- **Place the 2-1/4 cups** flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt in a mixing bowl and whisk to combine. In a separate bowl, thoroughly whisk the olive oil, half and half, egg, and vanilla. Using a large spatula, fold in the strawberries and then the flour mixture just until incorporated—don't overmix.

Technique: Using a Bench Scraper

Though it's quite helpful for massing and moving dough on your work surface, this lightweight tool does more than its name suggests. Use the edge to divide dough for scones, biscuits, cookies, and crackers, and the flat side to transfer them to your baking sheet—it's even a handy way to move any cut-up food from board to pot.

A similar gadget is the cake lifter. It too has a flat surface and a cutting edge, but is overall much bigger, so you can use it to lift and transfer larger quantities of food as well as cake layers. You can also use its edge for smoothing the finish when frosting a cake on a turntable.



- **Turn the dough** out onto the parchment paper. Heavily flour your
(continued on next page)



Strawberry Scones

A spring take on a British bake

hands and use them to pat the dough into a 12-inch by 8-inch rectangle (do not use a rolling pin). If the dough is extremely wet, sprinkle on 1 tablespoon of additional flour. Cut the rectangle into four sections, then cut each section into thirds on a diagonal to make a total of 12 triangles. Use the flat side of a bench scraper to space them out, leaving 2 inches between them.

- **Bake for about** 16 minutes, rotating halfway through, or until the scones turn a very light brown and the tip of a sharp knife inserted in the side of two or three comes out clean.

- **Serve warm or** at room temperature. Store any leftovers in the fridge.

Yields 12 scones

Ingredient Spotlight: Strawberries

What makes strawberries so good for you? Along with vitamins, minerals, and fiber, they're loaded with important micronutrients such as polyphenols, or plant compounds, including anthocyanins, the source of strawberries' vibrant color. All fruits with a deep color are typically good for you, but the darker the color, the greater the amount of health benefits. Exotic-looking white strawberries are all the rage—some say they taste sweeter—yet their lack of red pigment means they have fewer micronutrients than do traditional red ones.

According to research, strawberries pack a serious punch when it comes to overall health, like helping reduce the risk of diabetes and improve metabolic and cardiovascular health. Some studies show that you may need to eat between 1 and 2-1/2 cups a day to get these benefits, but strawberries have fewer than 50 calories per cup, so that's not a huge chunk of the average daily intake.

Whether buying at a farmers' market or grocery, look for firm berries with bright green caps and no soft spots. If you aren't eating them right away, store in the fridge in a container that allows some air circulation, but keep in mind that cold reduces their polyphenols. If the strawberries come packed in a plastic clam shell, place a paper towel over the top of the berries to absorb moisture, and store the pack upside down. Check periodically for any soft ones and discard them. Wait until using to rinse.





Banana-Peanut Smoothie

The perfect pairing for eat-and-run mornings

Using whole peanuts—your preference of raw or roasted—rather than peanut butter gives this fast-and-furious breakfast a toothsome texture.

1 banana, sliced and frozen

1 ounce peanuts

3/4 cup milk, your choice of dairy or
unsweetened plant-based milk

1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
Dash of cinnamon

• **Combine all the** ingredients in
your blender and run the machine
until smooth.
Yields 1 serving



Flawless Fried Egg Sandwich

A hot breakfast in under 10 minutes



Love fried eggs but never quite satisfied with how they cook up at home? This simple technique makes all the difference. When you get your pan hot first, then add the olive oil—which I suggest every time you cook with EVOO—it creates a perfectly browned latticework around the edges of the white while leaving the yolk with just the right amount of runny. With a stovetop griddle you can fry 4 eggs at once.

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil,
plus more for drizzling

2 extra-large eggs

4 slices of your choice of bread,
toasted

Coarse sea salt and freshly ground
black pepper, to taste

Optional garnish: chopped fresh
herbs

• **Heat a 10-inch** or larger frying pan or skillet over medium-high heat. When hot, add the olive oil. Once the oil starts to shimmer, add the eggs,

(continued on next page)



Flawless Fried Egg Sandwich

A hot breakfast in under 10 minutes

one at a time—you can crack them right into the pan. Cook the eggs for 3 minutes until the whites turn opaque and develop crisp, brown edges; the

yolks will still be runny. If you want firmer yolks, wait another 30 seconds before taking the pan off the heat. Use an offset spatula to transfer the

eggs to the toast, season to taste with salt and pepper, and add a drizzle of olive oil and chopped herbs, if using. *Yields 1 to 2 servings*

Technique: Buying and Storing Eggs

Eggshell colors can be pastel-pretty, from brown to blue and green, but color tells you only the type of hen that laid them, not how they were raised. Yolks are vibrant yellow-orange when hens are free to roam and eat pasture vegetation—look for terms like Animal Welfare Approved, USDA Organic, and Certified Humane on the carton. Yolks are light yellow when hens feed on meal in confined conditions. If you're lucky enough to live near a farm or farmers' market that sells fresh eggs, make

friends with the purveyor and find out how their hens are raised.

Size matters when baking. Starting with the small size, the eggs become larger in just 1/4-ounce increments. That doesn't sound like a lot, until you consider the leap from small at 1-1/2 ounces to jumbo at 2-1/2 ounces. If you need four extra-large eggs (2-1/4 ounces each) for a recipe, for instance, and only have large eggs (2 ounces each) in the fridge, you'll need five to equal the right amount. A medium egg is 1-3/4 ounces.

Since eggshells easily absorb odors, keep eggs in their original

carton and always keep them refrigerated. If a recipe calls for eggs to be at room temperature, take out only what you'll use, not the entire carton. Refrigerated eggs will stay fresh for more than a month.

If a recipe calls for yolks only, save those whites—they're a great addition to scrambled or even fried eggs. Turn them into **"Petit Pavlovas"** (see page 41), or freeze them either in an ice cube tray or freezer-safe container—mark it so you'll know how many whites are inside the next time you want to whip up a meringue!





Smoked Salmon and Dill Tart

A flaky alternative to a breakfast bagel

This gorgeous dish comes together with only a few ingredients and very little active prep. It's the perfect example of using olive oil as Mother Nature's "sauce"—a drizzle right before serving turns EVOO into the star of this dish. Look for frozen puff pastry made with real butter, such as the Dufour Pastry Kitchen brand—the company also has a vegan version. One large tart offers a dramatic presentation, but you can also cut the dough into 6 or 8 equal pieces for individual tartlets.

One 14-ounce sheet frozen puff pastry

White whole wheat flour

1 small egg

12 ounces whipped cream cheese, crème fraîche, or plain Icelandic skyr, at room temperature

4 ounces smoked salmon, cut into strips

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

1 small red onion, chopped

2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill

Optional: 2 tablespoons capers, drained

- **Defrost the puff** pastry according to package directions. Preheat your oven to 400°F. Place a piece of parchment paper about 24 inches in length on your countertop and sprinkle on a small amount of flour, then flour your rolling pin. Unfold the thawed dough on the paper, gently roll out the creases, and then roll it to about a 10-inch by 16-inch rectangle. Use a paring

knife to trim any uneven edges and then to score a border 1 inch in from the edges on all four sides—it will look like a picture frame (be sure not to cut all the way through the dough). Lightly prick the dough within the border in an even pattern with a fork. Slide the parchment paper with the dough onto a rimmed sheet pan, cutting off or folding under any excess paper. Whisk the egg with 1 teaspoon of water and brush it over the dough.

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Smoked Salmon and Dill Tart

A flaky alternative to a breakfast bagel

- **Bake the pastry** for about 30 minutes, until it puffs up and browns. Let the tart shell cool for 5 minutes and then use a long offset metal spatula to

spread the cream cheese within the pastry border. Top with the strips of smoked salmon, drizzle evenly with the olive oil, then sprinkle with the red

onion, dill, and capers, if using. Serve immediately.

Yields 6 to 8 servings

Ingredient Spotlight: Specialty Flours

All-purpose flour is fine for many recipes, but there are other flours to consider, especially when baking. Much of the difference centers on protein content—more protein means more gluten and more structure to the baked item. A firmer result is often desirable for certain breads, while a more tender crumb is ideal for cakes, muffins, and cookies, for example. The reason you'll often see the warning to not overmix a batter is because that encourages more gluten development—again, great for breads (that's why all the kneading is needed), not for lighter baked goods.

A flour's name typically signals which recipes to use it in:

All-purpose flour. This generally has a protein content between 10% and 12%.

Bread flour. With a protein content between 14% and 16%, results will be more chewy.

Pastry flour. More delicate milling and a protein content closer to 9% add tenderness to pastries, pie crusts, pound cakes, and rolled and bar cookies.

Cake flour. In the range of 7% to 10% protein, this flour helps create a delicate crumb and melt-in-your-mouth texture, perfect for layer cakes, especially sponge and chiffon cakes.

What about **whole wheat flours**? They're a great way to get some fiber along with many nutrients, though they will change the texture of baked goods. That's because traditional whole wheat flour is milled from hard red wheat rather than hard white wheat and it creates a denser finish.

Reach for regular whole wheat flour to thicken sauces, make gravy, and dredge proteins, from chicken cutlets to scallops, before sautéing. When baking, consider two other kinds of whole wheat flour: **whole wheat white flour** and **whole wheat pastry flour**. Both are

milled from hard white wheat, which has a milder flavor than red wheat yet still contains the wheat germ, bran, and endosperm of whole grains for fiber along with some protein, vitamins, and minerals. But unless a recipe was specifically developed with a whole wheat flour, you don't want to replace all the white flour because you will not get the same results, especially with yeasted doughs. Start by replacing just a quarter of the refined all-purpose, pastry, or cake flour called for with one of them and see how you like the taste—with this amount, you may not notice any difference, especially in cookies and layer cakes. Keep experimenting, swapping more until you reach about half.

If you want to completely forgo any type of wheat flour, try a **nut flour** or "meal." You can make delicious flourless cakes and cookies with finely ground almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, and pistachios.



Caprese "Rollatini"

These mini rolls make a delish first course

This is a wonderful way to present all the ingredients in a caprese salad. It's a flavorful hors d'oeuvre that takes only a few minutes to put together. Serve individual portions or arrange pieces on a large cutting board on a buffet.

12 thin slices prosciutto di Parma,
about 6 ounces

6 ounces mozzarella, sliced into
slivers with a serrated knife

1 cup cherry tomatoes, cut into
small pieces

6 to 8 basil leaves, cut into thin
ribbons, plus more for garnish

Fine sea salt

Extra virgin olive oil

Balsamic vinegar of Modena

- **Place a long** piece of parchment or wax paper on a large cutting board. Arrange 6 prosciutto slices next to each other vertically, overlapping them by about an inch to make a rectangle. Layer half the cheese over the prosciutto, leaving a 1-inch border along the bottom and a 2-inch border along the top. Layer half the tomatoes over the cheese, and then top with some basil and lightly sprinkle with salt. Drizzle

lavishly with olive oil and vinegar. Starting with the long side closest to you, tightly roll up the prosciutto, using the paper as a guide. When you've finished rolling, turn the roll so that the seam is on the bottom. Use a very sharp knife to cut the roll into 8 pieces. Repeat with the rest of the ingredients. Plate the rollatini, drizzle with more oil and vinegar, and garnish with basil. *Yields 4 servings*

Tzatziki

A versatile dip brimming with flavor

This Greek classic is wonderful for dipping raw or grilled vegetables and as an accompaniment to “Roasted Lamb Tenderloin” (see page 28) and other meats. To use it for souvlaki, spread it generously on pita bread and layer on cubes of meat (grilled cubes are traditional but not mandatory!), tomatoes, red onions, and lettuce.



1 English cucumber

3/4 teaspoon fine sea salt, plus more to taste

2 garlic cloves, minced

1 cup plain Greek yogurt

1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice, plus more to taste

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling

1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, plus more to taste

1 scallion, sliced thin

• **Use a box grater** to grate the cucumber, peel and all, over a large piece of parchment or wax paper (alternatively, you can use a food processor and its grating disc). Transfer the grated cucumber to a mesh strainer set over a large bowl, sprinkle with 1/2 teaspoon of salt, and toss; leave for 30 minutes to sweat the cucumber.

• **Squeeze the cucumber** in your hands to get rid of more liquid. Then place it on paper towels, roll it up, and squeeze one more time. Rinse the bowl that was under the strainer and add the cucumber. Fold in the rest of the ingredients except for the scallion. Taste and season as needed with more black pepper and salt. Transfer to a serving bowl, sprinkle on the scallions, and drizzle with olive oil. *Yields 1-1/2 cups or enough for 4 to 6 servings*



Tomato Shooters

A tasty soup brimming with nutrients

This cold tomato soup is a snap to make and smooth enough to sip without a spoon. It can be served at room temperature or chilled.

4 ounces crusty bread, cut into pieces
1 pound cherry tomatoes, halved
2 garlic cloves
1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar of Modena, plus more to taste
1/2 cup cold water

1/2 teaspoon celery seeds
1 teaspoon fine sea salt, plus more to taste
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, plus more to taste
Optional garnish: celery sticks
• **In a high-powered** blender or food processor, pulse the bread until it forms crumbs. Add the tomatoes and

garlic and process until almost puréed. Add the olive oil, vinegar, water, celery seeds, salt, and pepper and process until smooth. Taste and season with more salt and pepper as needed.

• **Transfer to 4** highball glasses, drizzle with olive oil, and garnish, if desired, with a celery stick.
Yields 4 servings



Crustless Asparagus Quiche

A gluten-free version of a perennial favorite

Love quiche but want to skip the dough? Crustless quiche to the rescue! This recipe has layers of flavor from the vegetables, cheese, and herbes de Provence, a dried herb mix from the south of France.

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil,
plus more for drizzling

8 ounces mushrooms, such as
creminis

4 ounces yellow onion, coarsely
chopped

8 ounces asparagus, trimmed and
cut into 3-inch lengths

4 extra-large eggs

1 cup whole milk

1/2 cup half and half

5 ounces freshly grated Gruyère,

cheddar, or another hard cheese,
divided use

1/2 teaspoon herbes de Provence

1 teaspoon coarse sea salt

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black
pepper

4 ounces Campari tomatoes, halved

Note: If you don't have an oven-safe skillet, swirl 1 additional tablespoon of olive oil around a deep pie plate, add the cooked vegetables, egg mixture,

tomatoes, and the rest of the cheese, and bake as directed.

• **Preheat your oven** to 375°F. Heat a 10-inch oven-safe skillet or cast-iron frying pan over medium heat. When hot, add the olive oil and sauté the mushrooms until they release all their liquid. Add the onions and sauté until soft and deep brown. Add the asparagus and cook for 2 more minutes.

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Crustless Asparagus Quiche

A gluten-free version of a perennial favorite

• **In a large bowl**, whisk the eggs with the milk and half and half. Add 3/4 of the cheese, the dried herbs, salt, and pepper. Pour into the pan over the sautéed vegetables. Scatter the tomato halves over the top and sprinkle with the rest of the cheese. Bake for 35 minutes until lightly browned; there

shouldn't be any wobble in the center. Let cool for 15 minutes before serving with a drizzle of olive oil.
Yields 6 servings

Ingredient Spotlight: Asparagus

Nothing says spring like fresh, local asparagus. Some people swear by the thinnest stalks, while others like the mouthfeel of very thick ones—it's really a matter of personal preference. You might even want to try white asparagus, grown completely underground or in full shade so that it doesn't pick up any chlorophyll.

The real key to asparagus is to trim the ends simply by snapping them off with your fingers at the point where you find no resistance—that will leave you with the most tender parts of the stalks. Three ounces of these low-calorie antioxidant powerhouses supply 2 grams each of fiber and protein, plus good amounts of folic acid and vitamin K, along with iron, potassium, and many other minerals.

Not a member of
the Fresh-Pressed
Olive Oil Club?

Please see
page 3 for your
special invitation.



Pea Pesto and Burrata Bruschetta

A springtime switch from the traditional topping

Move over tomatoes! This twist on bruschetta topping uses a pesto of fresh peas and creamy burrata—a mozzarella ball filled with cheese curds and real cream. If you happen to have your grill fired up, brush the bread with olive oil and grill on both sides, then rub with the garlic and top as directed.

6 ounces shelled peas

1-1/2 garlic cloves, divided use

1/2 cup (about 2 ounces) freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

1 ounce pine nuts or walnuts

1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil, plus more for the bread and drizzling

Coarse sea salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

8 thick slices hearty bread, preferably whole grain

4 ounces burrata, cut into chunks

Pickled radishes (“**Quick Pickled Radishes**” page 17)

Optional garnish: basil leaves



- **To make the pea pesto**, place the peas, whole garlic clove, cheese, and nuts in your food processor and pulse until very finely minced. With the machine running, add the olive oil and process until fairly smooth. Taste, then add salt and pepper, if desired (the cheese often lends enough saltiness).

- **Toast the bread**, then rub one side with the half garlic clove and drizzle with olive oil. Top with equal amounts of pesto and burrata. Finish with a few radish slices, a final drizzle of olive oil, and basil, if using.

Yields 8 servings, 4 as a main course



Quick Pickled Radishes

A crunchy snack and zesty garnish

This technique works wonderfully for radishes and other firm vegetables like cucumbers, cabbage, and thin green beans (haricots verts) that will keep their crunch.

1/3 cup distilled white vinegar

1/4 cup sugar

2 teaspoons coarse sea salt

2 cups cold water

8 ounces radishes, thinly sliced

4 ounces red onion, slivered

- **Place the vinegar**, sugar, salt, and water in a medium saucepan. Bring the mixture to a boil. Boil for about a minute, stirring well to thoroughly dissolve the salt and sugar.

- **Remove from the heat** and add the radishes and red onion to the pot. Once the liquid reaches room temperature, transfer the vegetables and all the liquid to a large glass jar. Store in the fridge for up to a month. *Yields about 2 cups*

Steamed Artichokes with Mustard Dipping Sauce

A simple technique for an exotic vegetable



For the mustard dipping sauce:

2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 tablespoon sherry vinegar
1 teaspoon sugar
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons half and half
1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill

For the artichokes:

4 large artichokes
1 lemon, quartered

• **Make the dipping** sauce: Whisk the mustard, lemon juice, vinegar, and sugar in a bowl. Drizzle in the olive oil, whisking continuously until emulsified, then whisk in the half and half and the dill.

• **Steam the artichokes:** In a large lidded pot, bring 2 inches of water to a boil while you prep the artichokes. Cut off the top quarter of each artichoke and all but 1 inch of the stem; pull off and discard any small petals around the stem. Use kitchen shears to snip off the sharp tips of the remaining petals, working your way around row by row.

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Steamed Artichokes with Mustard Dipping Sauce

A simple technique for an exotic vegetable

After prepping each artichoke, place it in a large bowl filled with cold water and the juice of two lemon quarters to prevent discoloration. Once all the artichokes are ready, use tongs to put all the lemon quarters in the water, place a steamer basket in the bottom of the pot, and arrange the artichokes standing upright.

- **Reduce the heat** to a simmer and cover the pot. Steam the artichokes for 40 minutes, checking the pot periodically to make sure there's enough water in the bottom; add more as needed. A petal near the center should come out without much resistance when they're ready. Serve each artichoke on a plate with individual portions of sauce.

Yields 4 servings

Ingredient Spotlight: Artichokes

It's easy to be intimidated by the look of artichokes and even easier to just buy them jarred or frozen when using them in recipes. But a freshly steamed artichoke makes a tasty light lunch or great vegetable-based first course. Native to the Mediterranean region but also grown in California (where it's the state vegetable!), artichokes are low in calories and rich in potassium, fiber, and antioxidants. They're a good source of vitamin C, folate, and magnesium. A fresh artichoke should feel firm and heavy in your hand and have tightly packed petals (also called leaves), which should be smooth, not shriveled.

Technique: How to Eat an Artichoke

To eat, pull off one petal at a time, and dip the base end in your sauce. Pull the base through your teeth to scrape off the pulpy portion of the petal. Repeat with the rest of the petals (they'll have more pulp to them as you near the heart). Use a grapefruit spoon to scrape out the choke—the prickly pink-purple fuzz over the heart—and discard it. Use your fingers or a knife and fork to eat the tender heart and any bit of stem.



Baked Goat Cheese with Arugula

A California classic that's as delicious as ever

It's been over 40 years since famed chef Alice Waters of the iconic Chez Panisse in Berkeley dreamed up the idea of baking slices of goat cheese and serving them on a bed of greens. The dish has been popular ever since. My version adds roasted carrots and beets for a sweet counterpoint along with the walnuts.

For the vinaigrette:

2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
1/2 tablespoon Dijon mustard
1/2 tablespoon honey
1/4 teaspoon coarse sea salt
1/2 garlic clove, minced
1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

For the salad:

4 large red or yellow beets, trimmed
8 carrots, trimmed and peeled
5 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, divided use
1/3 cup homemade fine breadcrumbs or panko



1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
8-ounce goat cheese log
8 ounces arugula or mix of spring greens
24 walnut halves

- **Make the vinaigrette:** In a medium mixing bowl, whisk together the vinegar, mustard, honey, salt, and garlic. Gradually whisk in the olive oil until the dressing is emulsified. Season to taste with black pepper.

- **Roast the root vegetables:** Preheat your oven to 400°F. Quarter the beets (peel them after roasting) and slice the carrots lengthwise. Transfer to a rimmed sheet pan lined with parchment paper and toss with 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Roast until tender, 40 to 60 minutes.

- **When the vegetables** are almost done, prep the goat cheese. Line

another rimmed sheet pan with parchment paper. Place the rest of the olive oil in a small dish. In a second small dish, mix the breadcrumbs with the thyme. Slice the goat cheese log into 8 rounds and dip them, one at a time, into the olive oil and then into the breadcrumbs, and place on the sheet pan.

- **Take the vegetables** out of the oven and put in the pan with the goat cheese rounds. Bake for about 15 minutes or until the breadcrumbs are toasty and the cheese bubbles around the edges. Let cool for 5 minutes.

- **When cool enough** to handle, remove the peel from the beets. Divide the greens and roasted vegetables among eight salad bowls; drizzle with the vinaigrette. Place a cheese round on each dish along with a few walnuts. *Yields 8 servings, 4 as a main course*



Chicken and Bean Salad

A no-fuss protein bowl

This Mediterranean dish melds delicious flavors and textures—it's a great high-fiber way to elevate store-bought rotisserie chicken.

3 cups cooked red beans, drained
and rinsed if canned
1 cup celery, diced, plus a few celery
leaves
1 red bell pepper, stemmed, seeded,
and diced
1 small red onion, cut into slivers
1 garlic clove, finely minced
15-20 pitted kalamata olives, halved
if large

2 tablespoons coarsely chopped
fresh flat-leaf parsley
4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice or
red wine vinegar, more to taste
Coarse sea salt and freshly ground
black pepper, to taste
1 head of romaine lettuce
12 ounces roasted chicken, shredded
or diced

• **In a mixing bowl**, combine the beans, celery, bell pepper, onion, garlic, olives, and parsley. Add the olive oil and lemon juice or vinegar, and toss. Season to taste with salt and pepper and add more lemon juice or

vinegar, if desired. Rinse the romaine lettuce leaves, slice them into ribbons, and arrange in four salad bowls. Top with equal amounts of the vegetable mixture and chicken.

Yields 4 servings

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Italian Wedding Soup

A comfort food that can double as dinner

This soup is a marriage of meat and vegetables. While the original Italian version features shredded meat, here in the US, you'll traditionally see it made with tiny meatballs. If you want zestier flavor, choose hot sausage or a mix of hot and sweet. The other little balls are a pasta called acini de pepe, or seed of the pepper, a reference to its pepper-corn-like size. It's available from a number of Italian pasta brands like De Cecco and Colavita, but you can substitute pastina, ditalini, or tiny shells if necessary.

For the meatballs:

- 1 pound sweet sausage meat
- 1/2 cup homemade fine breadcrumbs or panko
- 1/2 cup (about 2 ounces) freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
- 1 large egg
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 1/2 teaspoon coarse sea salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 5 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, divided use, more if needed



For the soup:

- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 cups diced carrots
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1/3 cup white wine
- 3 quarts homemade or low-sodium store-bought chicken stock
- 2 bay leaves
- 8 ounces acini de pepe, uncooked
- 8 ounces escarole, rinsed and cut into ribbons (about 4 cups)

• **Make the meatballs:** Mix the sausage, breadcrumbs, cheese, egg, garlic, parsley, salt, pepper, and 2 tablespoons of the olive oil in a large bowl. Use a rounded teaspoon, melon baller, or 1-inch mini ice cream scoop to help you form 1-inch meatballs. Heat a

large Dutch oven or stockpot over medium heat. When hot, add the rest of the olive oil and brown the meatballs on all sides until completely cooked through. Work in batches if necessary to avoid crowding.

• **Use a slotted spoon** to transfer the meatballs to a bowl. Add the onions, carrots, and celery to the Dutch oven. Sauté until soft, about 10 minutes. Deglaze the pan with the wine, scraping up any bits. Add the chicken stock along with the bay leaves and bring to a boil. Add the pasta and cook according to package directions for al dente. Add back the meatballs along with the escarole and simmer for 10 minutes. Remove the bay leaves before serving. *Yields 8 servings*

Meatballs with Spinach and Orzo

A one-dish meal to serve a crowd

All the cooking is done in one pan with an unusual pasta prep. The meatballs are equally delicious when made with a pound each of ground chicken and pork.

8 garlic cloves, divided use
2 tablespoons fresh parsley
2 pounds ground chicken, preferably thighs
7 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, divided use, plus more for drizzling
1-1/2 cups freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, divided use
1/2 cup panko or freshly made breadcrumbs
2 extra-large eggs
2 teaspoons lemon zest, divided use
2 teaspoons fine sea salt, plus more to taste
2 teaspoons freshly ground black pepper, plus more to taste
1 pound orzo
1/2 cup lemon juice
3 cups chicken broth, plus more as needed
2 cups half-and-half
4 cups fresh baby spinach, rinsed and patted dry



- **Place 4 garlic** cloves and the parsley in the bowl of your food processor and pulse until finely minced. Add in the chicken, 3 tablespoons olive oil, 1/2 cup Parmigiano-Reggiano, the panko, eggs, and 1 teaspoon each lemon zest, salt, and pepper. Process until well combined. With damp hands (to minimize sticking), roll the mixture into balls about 1 to 1-1/2 inches in diameter. You should have between 30 and 35 balls.

- **Cut the remaining** garlic cloves into thin slices; set aside. Heat a large pan over medium-high heat. When hot, add 3 tablespoons olive oil and the meatballs (cook in two batches if necessary to avoid crowding) and cook, turning with tongs, until brown on all sides and an instant-read thermometer reads 165°F when you check a few meatballs. Use a slotted spoon to transfer the meatballs to a bowl next to your cooktop.

- **In the same** skillet, add the final tablespoon olive oil and sauté the reserved garlic slices for 1 minute. Stir in the orzo and toss to coat in the olive oil; sauté for 2 minutes. Pour in the lemon juice and deglaze the pan, using a heat-resistant spatula to scrape up all the brown bits. Add the 3 cups broth, the half-and-half, spinach, and the remaining lemon zest and salt. Stir until the greens are wilted, then simmer for 10 minutes until the orzo is al dente. If the liquid becomes too thick before the orzo is done, add an additional cup of broth (or water).

- **When the orzo** is done, return the meatballs to the pan and sprinkle on the remaining cup of cheese; stir to combine. Cover the pan and simmer for 3 more minutes until the cheese melts into the sauce. Serve in oversized bowls with a drizzle of olive oil.

Yields 6 servings

Chicken Piccata

Tender cutlets in a lemon and caper sauce

The origin of chicken piccata is somewhat in dispute—some say it's an Italian-American take on a classic veal recipe from the Boot. Certainly, it's long been a mainstay on many Italian restaurant menus here in the US. No matter who gets credit for it, one thing is certain: It's delicious and cooks up in a single pan. Your favorite pasta and steamed asparagus make perfect sides, with enough sauce to dress all.

2 pounds skinless, boneless chicken breasts

3/4 cup white whole wheat flour, more if needed

1 teaspoon fine sea salt

1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Extra virgin olive oil, as needed

6 garlic cloves, peeled and sliced

1 cup white wine

1 cup homemade or low-sodium store-bought chicken stock

1/4 cup capers, plus 1 tablespoon of their brine

1 lemon, halved

2 tablespoons butter, cut into small pieces

1/4 cup finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley



• **Slice each chicken** breast horizontally into 2 or 3 thin cutlets (see “**Technique: Slicing Chicken Cutlets**” on page 25). In a deep pie plate, mix the flour, salt, and pepper. Heat a very large skillet over medium heat. When

hot, add 3 tablespoons olive oil. One at a time, dredge the cutlets in the flour mixture, shake off any excess, and place in the skillet. Don't crowd the cutlets—work in batches if needed, adding 2 more tablespoons of olive oil

to the skillet before adding the next batch.

• **When the cutlets** have browned on the bottom (after about 5 minutes), flip

(continued on next page)



Chicken Piccata

Tender cutlets in a lemon and caper sauce

and continue cooking for another 3 minutes (the thinner the cutlet, the less time each will take). Transfer the cutlets to a clean large platter next to your stovetop.

- **Add another tablespoon** of olive oil to the skillet if needed, and sauté the garlic until fragrant and lightly browned. Deglaze the pan with the wine, scraping up any bits, then add the broth. Bring to a simmer and add back the cutlets (submerge them as much as possible) along with the capers and brine. Continue cooking until the liquid reduces by half and the chicken is cooked through. Squeeze in the juice of one lemon half and stir in the butter. Cook for 2 more minutes, then sprinkle with the parsley. Cut the remaining lemon half into wedges and serve along with 2 or 3 cutlets per person.

Yields 4 to 6 servings



Technique: Slicing Chicken Cutlets

Thinly sliced cutlets cook fast so they stay tender. If you can't find breasts already cut scallopini style or just want to save the extra cost that brings, you can easily prep chicken breasts yourself at home. First, give the cutlets a deep chill in the freezer for about 30 minutes—this makes them easier to slice. While you're waiting, set out a platter and grab your raw-only cutting board and a sharp chef's knife.

Working one breast at a time, place it on your cutting board and place the palm of one hand over the top of the breast. Very carefully, slice the breast horizontally in half if not very thick or into thirds or fourths if thick (the top slice may be smaller in length than the rest but should be the same thickness). Now you're ready to proceed with your recipe.

You can use this technique to slice any animal protein, though a large piece, like a brisket, may need up to an hour in the freezer to firm up. To prep meat for thin London broil-style slices, for instance, slice against the grain—in the opposite direction of the meat fibers.

For already frozen meat that you're defrosting, slice before it thaws out completely.

Beef Bulgogi with Scallions

Just the right amounts of spicy and sweet

This Korean dish, traditionally made with beef or pork, is also delicious with lamb, a meat gaining popularity in Korea as well as the US. If you don't already have the Asian staples for this recipe in your pantry, they're worth shopping for, at either a large supermarket or an Asian food store like H Mart—once you have them, you'll reach for them time and again. Tan-skinned Asian pears, often the size of a grapefruit, have a distinct texture and tenderizing enzyme. They're easier to find at markets than in the past, but you can use a large Bosc pear or 8 ounces of fresh pineapple instead. Serve the bulgogi with rice or as sandwiches on soft buns.

- 1 Asian pear, cored and quartered
- 1 medium carrot, peeled and cut into chunks
- 1 medium yellow onion, peeled and cut into chunks
- 4 garlic cloves
- 2-inch piece fresh ginger, peeled if needed
- 1/2 cup soy sauce
- 5 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, divided use
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons sake or sherry
- 2 tablespoons mirin
- 1 cup apple cider
- 2 pounds boneless cut of beef, such as skirt steak, brisket, or round
- 2 tablespoons white sesame seeds, lightly toasted
- 6 scallions, trimmed and sliced on the diagonal into 1-inch pieces

- **Make the marinade:** Add the pear, carrots, onions, garlic, and ginger to your food processor and pulse until minced. Add the soy sauce, 2 tablespoons olive oil, sesame oil, brown sugar, sake, mirin, and cider, and process until you get a thick sauce. Transfer to a large glass bowl.

- **Slice the meat** as thinly as possible (see “**Technique: Slicing Chicken Cutlets**” on page 25)

- **Add the meat** to the bowl with the marinade, submerging it as much as possible. Cover tightly and place in the fridge overnight.

- **To cook, heat** a very large sauté pan over medium high heat. When hot, add 3 tablespoons olive oil, then use tongs to transfer the meat from the marinade to the pan. (You may need to do this in batches.) Sauté until cooked through and transfer to a platter. Pour all the



marinating liquid left in the bowl into the pan and bring to a boil. Boil the liquid down for 5 to 10 minutes, until it reaches a syrupy consistency. Pour it over the meat, tossing well. Sprinkle with the sesame seeds and top with the scallions.

Yields 6 servings

Chinese Roast Pork, Simplified

Marinating overnight adds flavor without labor

Authentic Chinese roast pork (like Peking duck) requires a lot of time and special equipment. My flavorful marinade brings results just as delicious with little active work—and no red dye needed.

For the marinade:

- 4 garlic cloves
- 2-inch piece fresh ginger, peeled if needed
- 4 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 cup honey
- 1/2 teaspoon Chinese five-spice powder
- 2 tablespoons sesame oil
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, plus more for the rack
- 2 tablespoons Shaoxing rice wine or sherry vinegar
- 2 tablespoons hoisin sauce

For the pork:

- 2 pork tenderloins, about 1 pound each
- **Pulse the garlic** and ginger in a mini food processor until finely chopped. Add the rest of the marinade ingredients and process until smooth. Reserve and refrigerate half in a dish.
- **Place the tenderloins** in a baking dish long enough to hold them and coat with the rest of the marinade,



cover, and refrigerate anywhere from 4 hours to overnight, turning once or twice to redistribute the marinade.

- **When ready to cook**, preheat your oven to 400°F. Line a roasting pan with foil and place a wire roasting rack in the pan; brush the rack lightly with olive oil. Pour 2 cups of water into the bottom of the pan. Center the tenderloins on the rack and place in the oven; set a timer for 20 minutes.

- **Meanwhile, bring the** reserved marinade to a boil in a small saucepan and cook for 3 to 5 minutes to thicken; transfer half to a small bowl. After 20 minutes in the oven, take out the

tenderloins and baste with the thickened marinade from the bowl; repeat after another 20 minutes. The pork is ready when the internal temperature on an instant-read thermometer inserted in the center of each tenderloin registers 160°F, about 60 minutes in total, depending on their thickness.

- **Transfer the tenderloins** to a cutting board and let stand for 5 minutes. Cut the tenderloins on the diagonal into 1/2-inch slices and arrange on a platter. Briefly reheat the marinade in the saucepan and serve with the pork as a dipping sauce.

Yields 6 to 8 servings

Roasted Lamb Tenderloin

This choice cut needs only a quick prep

Lamb tenderloin or filet is a boneless cut that's becoming more readily available. You can also use a leg of lamb that's been butterflied to remove the bone. Both have a much shorter cooking time than a conventional leg of lamb. This marinade is a terrific way to enhance any cut of lamb. If you can plan ahead, marinating the lamb overnight will enhance the flavor. Creamy polenta makes a delicious accompaniment.

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil,
plus more for drizzling

3 large garlic cloves, peeled and
coarsely chopped

1 teaspoon fresh rosemary needles

2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice or
best-quality balsamic vinegar of
Modena

2-3 pounds lamb tenderloin or
butterflied leg of lamb

Coarse sea salt

Freshly ground black pepper

• **Add the olive oil**, garlic, rosemary, and lemon juice to the bowl of a mini food processor and pulse until the garlic and rosemary are finely chopped. Place the lamb in a glass dish long enough to hold it and season generously with salt and pepper. Coat the lamb on all sides with the garlic-rosemary mixture and let stand at room temperature for 1 hour or, covered, overnight in the fridge.

• **Put an oven** rack in the center position of your oven and preheat



to 375°F. Roast the lamb for 40 to 45 minutes (about 20 minutes per pound) for medium-rare or until the internal temperature on an instant-read meat thermometer registers 130°F. (Roast for 10 minutes longer if you prefer it less pink.) After removing the lamb from the oven, loosely tent it with foil and allow it to rest for 15 minutes before carving into thick slices. Arrange the slices on a long platter and drizzle with olive oil before serving. *Yields 6 to 8 servings*

Ingredient Spotlight: Lamb

It's time to sing the praises of lamb, a red meat that, depending on the cut, can have less fat than beef. Grass-fed lamb in particular tends to have less fat than grain-fed lamb. Read labels to know for sure how the lamb was raised—New Zealand lamb, as well as most lamb raised in Colorado and some parts of the Midwest, is primarily if not completely grass-fed. (Surprisingly, imported lamb is often less expensive than US-grown.) One reason lamb tenderloin can be pricey is because of the butcher's work involved, but you're also getting pure meat.

In addition to being a great protein source, with about 20 grams in 3 ounces, lamb has important vitamins and minerals—B12, iron, potassium, and zinc. As with most red meats, you want to remove as much of the visible white fat as possible before cooking to limit your saturated fat intake.



Baked Salmon with Spring Herbs

A garlicky crust elevates this favorite fish

The simple herb mix creates a flavorful crust as the salmon cooks. It's equally tasty when grilled.

4 garlic cloves

2 cups assorted fresh herbs such as flat-leaf parsley, basil, chives, and oregano

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, plus more for the pan and drizzling

1-1/2 to 2-pound salmon fillet, skin on

- **Place the garlic** and herbs in your food processor and process until finely chopped. With the machine running, add the olive oil and continue to process until you have a thick paste.

- **Preheat your oven** to 350°F. Line a rimmed sheet pan with parchment

paper and drizzle with olive oil. Place the salmon, skin side down, on the parchment, and coat with the herb mixture, pressing it in place. Bake until the fillet feels firm to the touch, about 15 minutes, depending on thickness. Let cool briefly before slicing and serving. *Yields 4 servings*



Shrimp with Pistou

A French dipping sauce adds zest

Pistou, best known as an enrichment for vegetable soup, is the French counterpart to Italy's pesto, made from garlic, fresh basil, and olive oil. Modern takes now include grated cheese, but I've kept it simple for an accompaniment to shrimp. Make it with a mortar and pestle, a molcajete, or a small food processor. Grill the shrimp or simply sauté in olive oil on your stovetop.



3 large garlic cloves

20 fresh basil leaves

1/4 cup fresh flat-leaf parsley, packed

1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil, plus
more for the shrimp

1-1/2 pounds jumbo shrimp (21 to
25 count), peeled

1 teaspoon coarse sea salt

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black
pepper

Note: If using wooden or bamboo skewers, first soak them in water for 10 minutes to prevent burning..

• **Make the pistou** by thoroughly blending the garlic, herbs, and olive

Technique: Mincing Herbs

If you use fresh herbs often (and I hope you do!), the easiest way to mince or chop a small batch is with a mini food processor. This little appliance takes just a few seconds to work its magic. You can also toss in garlic (and ginger if a recipe calls for it), then drizzle in olive oil and, just like that, the task is complete and you can quickly finish your sauce, pesto, or vinaigrette.

oil by hand or machine. Transfer to a bowl; set aside for the flavors to meld.

• **Toss the shrimp** with salt, pepper, and a drizzle of olive oil. Thread on skewers and grill for 2 to 3 minutes on each side until pink. Serve with the pistou on the side.

Yields 4 servings





Crab Cakes with Remoulade Sauce

A restaurant dish easy to make at home

The availability of high-quality canned crabmeat turns this special-occasion dish into a meal you can quickly whip up anytime. Obryki's is a Baltimore crab emporium, and its delicious seasoning blend—also great in Bloody Marys—is now available online.



For the remoulade sauce:

1 cup best-quality mayonnaise
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon sriracha
1 teaspoon seafood seasoning, such as Obryki's or Old Bay
1 large dill pickle spear, diced
1 tablespoon pickle juice
2 tablespoons Dijon mustard

1 teaspoon sweet paprika

For the crabcakes:

1 small onion, peeled and quartered
1 small red bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and cut into chunks
1 stalk celery, trimmed and cut into chunks
3 sprigs fresh flat-leaf parsley
16 ounces crabmeat

1/2 cup homemade fine breadcrumbs or panko

1/2 cup best-quality mayonnaise
1-1/2 teaspoons sriracha, or to taste
1 teaspoon coarse sea salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

(continued on next page)



Crab Cakes with Remoulade Sauce

A restaurant dish easy to make at home

- **To make the** sauce, fold all the ingredients together and refrigerate until needed.

- **For the crabcakes**, place the onion, bell pepper, celery, and parsley in a food processor and pulse until finely minced. In a large bowl, break up the crabmeat with a fork and add the breadcrumbs, mayonnaise, sriracha, salt, and pepper; mix well. Fold in the minced vegetable mixture. Form into 6 patties.

- **Heat a large** frying pan over medium heat. When hot, add the olive oil and the crabcakes. Cook for 8 minutes, until a light crust forms, then flip and cook for another 5 minutes.

Yields 2 to 3 servings



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all these recipes.

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Ingredient Spotlight: Crabmeat

Buying crabmeat can be confusing, with many different types at many different price points. Here are the varieties you're most likely to see at stores:

Jumbo lump crabmeat comes from the two large muscles attached to the crab's swimming fins. These nuggets have an impressive size, bright white color, and delicious crab taste. Use it when crabmeat is the star of the dish, like a garlic-and-olive oil crabmeat sauté to top pasta. It's usually the most expensive option.

Lump crabmeat combines pieces of jumbo lump crabmeat and special crabmeat (see below). It's ideal for crab cakes and casseroles.

Special crabmeat is made from smaller pieces of meat taken from the body of the crab, and it works well in many recipes, from crab balls and dips to salads, wraps, and soups.

Claw meat comes from the swimming fins of the crab. It's brown in color and has a stronger flavor. Use it in dishes with heavy sauces or in dips and soups—the flavor of the crab will come through without being overpowering. It's usually the least expensive option.



Three-Peas Pasta

Ingredients traditionally used in pesto deliver extra pizzazz

This simple dish makes for a fast and fresh spring meal even if you only use one or two types of peas. The creaminess of the mascarpone combined with the delicate pop of the peas is a favorite in our home.

16 ounces pasta, any shape

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil,
plus more for drizzling

4 ounces freshly shelled peas

4 ounces sugar snap peas

4 ounces snow peas

1/4 cup pine nuts

8 ounces mascarpone, at room
temperature

Freshly grated nutmeg, to taste

Coarse sea salt and freshly ground
black pepper, to taste

1/2 cup freshly grated Parmigiano
Reggiano cheese

Optional garnish: small fresh basil
leaves

• **Boil the pasta** in salted water according to package directions. Meanwhile, heat a large frying pan. When hot, add the olive oil and sauté

all the peas over low heat for 3 to 5 minutes until tender and bright green. Add the pine nuts and sauté for 2 minutes, then transfer the peas and nuts to a large mixing bowl.

• **When the pasta** is done, strain it, reserving 1/4 cup of pasta water. Add the pasta to the bowl with the peas and immediately fold in the

(continued on next page)

Three-Peas Pasta

Ingredients traditionally used in pesto deliver extra pizzazz

mascarpone—the heat of the pasta will melt it, creating a sauce. Mix well to distribute the peas. If the sauce is too thick, add some of the pasta water, 1 tablespoon at a time, to thin it. Use a microplane grater to grate some nutmeg right over the pasta. Taste and season with salt and pepper as desired.

- **Finish the dish** with a sprinkling of cheese and a drizzle of olive oil; pass more of both when serving. Garnish with basil, if desired.

Yields 4 servings



Ingredient Spotlight: Peas

You might be surprised to know that green peas are technically a legume, like lentils, and not a true vegetable. Whatever you call them, fresh peas bear little resemblance to the canned varieties you might have grown up with (frozen peas are a good alternative, especially when fresh peas are out of season). I've featured different types of peas in a few recipes to showcase their versatility, here, in "**Pea Pesto and Burrata Bruschetta**"

on page 16, and "**Vegetables Primavera**" on page 36.

Sweet peas, snow peas, and snap peas all share a great nutrient profile—vitamins A, C, K, and folate, the minerals potassium and magnesium, and fiber, to name just a few. They can all be eaten raw, steamed, or after a quick sauté in olive oil, but there are some differences between them.

Sweet peas, or English peas, are fully grown peas that are often sold with the shell on (this preserves them) but need to be

shelled before eating as the pods aren't tasty.

Snow peas, or pea pods, are edible flat pods harvested before the peas start growing inside them (you may see the slightest start of peas).

Snap peas, or sugar snap peas, are a cross between the two—edible peas and pods.

Both snow and snap peas often come with tough strings that run along the seams; you can remove them by pulling them down from the top.

Hasselback New Potatoes

Crispy on the outside, creamy on the inside

Think of this dish as mid-century modern—it's said to have been created at Sweden's Hasselbacken restaurant in 1953, though there are accounts of the technique appearing in cookbooks that predate that. Whatever the origin of this dish, precise (and patient) knife work will reward you with potatoes infused with flavor. Take care not to go all the way through as you make each cut. A simple hack is to cradle each potato in a serving spoon to cut—the sides of the spoon will keep the knife from going too far down. To protect your fingers while holding the potato in place, rotate the potato in the spoon after you reach the center.



4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil,
plus more for drizzling

1/2 cup chopped fresh herbs, such
as flat-leaf parsley, chives, and
oregano

3 garlic cloves, minced, plus the
unpeeled cloves from the rest of
the head

1/2 teaspoon coarse sea salt

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black
pepper

2 pounds (about 8) new red or
yellow potatoes

- **Preheat your oven** to 425°F. Line a rimmed sheet pan with heat-resistant parchment paper. Whisk the olive oil, herbs, garlic, salt, and pepper in a bowl.

- **Working one potato** at a time, use a sharp paring knife to make cross-wise cuts, ideally every 1/8 inch and cutting only three-quarters of the way through. Then use a silicone pastry brush to brush on the herb mixture, holding open each cut in the potato with a finger so that the bristles can get

in between them. Place the potato on the sheet pan and repeat with the rest. Toss the unpeeled garlic cloves into the rest of the herby olive oil and scatter them around the potatoes.

- **Roast until the** potato centers are tender (test with the tip of a sharp knife), about 45 minutes, but take the garlic out after 15 minutes. Serve each portion with a roasted clove—squeeze out the softened garlic and spread it on the potatoes along with a drizzle of olive oil. *Yields 6 servings*

Vegetables Primavera

Spring in a skillet

This dish was inspired by pasta primavera, which, legend has it, originated not in Italy (where primavera means spring) but in the US. Some 40 years ago, Sirio Maccioni, owner of the famed New York restaurant Le Cirque, had the idea to throw together seasonal vegetables with pasta because he didn't have any tomatoes on hand. I like the freshness of my simple preparation—no butter or cream needed. Of course, you can switch up the veggies based on what's available in your area, especially if you're lucky enough to find rare springtime ones like ramps and fiddleheads. Always add the firmest vegetables to your pan first to give them the extra cooking time they need.



4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil,
more for drizzling

4 ounces broccoli, trimmed and cut
into florets

4 ounces thin string beans, such as
haricots verts

4 ounces asparagus spears, trimmed
and cut in half

4 ounces shelled green peas

1 teaspoon coarse sea salt

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper

Optional: freshly grated Parmigiano-
Reggiano cheese

- **Heat a 12-inch** skillet over medium-high heat. When very hot, add the olive oil, broccoli, and string beans, and cook for 2 minutes, rotating the

pieces so that all sides get a slight char. Add the asparagus, and toss every 30 seconds for about 2 minutes. Add the peas and turn down the heat to low. Sprinkle the veggies with the salt and pepper and cook until they're all tender. Remove from the heat and drizzle with olive oil and an optional sprinkling of cheese before serving.
Yields 4 servings

Sautéed Morels

A seasonal mushroom plurge

These savory mushrooms are always available dried, but if you can find them fresh at your spring farmers' markets, they are a delicacy to be savored. This simple preparation highlights their unique taste.



8 ounces morels

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

1 tablespoon unsalted butter

2 teaspoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

- **Rinse the morels** inside and out and cut them in half lengthwise, from crown to base. Check for any dirt and rinse again if needed; pat dry. Heat a sauté pan over medium heat. When hot, add the olive oil and morels. Cook, tossing often, for about 5 minutes until the morels turn a deep brown. Add the butter and parsley, and stir until the butter melts.

Yields 4 servings

Ingredient Spotlight: Morels

Morels are true harbingers of spring. These prized mushrooms, loaded with a variety of vitamins, minerals, and fiber, emerge as the weather warms and are only available for a short time. They grow in a variety of habitats, notably moist woodlands and under or near elms, ash trees, apple trees, conifers, and hardwoods. They're extremely hard to spot because their colors blend in so well with the surrounding vegetation.

Morels have large, distinctively honeycomb-patterned heads and are completely hollow inside. Slicing the morels lengthwise from crown to base helps them cook faster and lets you confirm that they are true morels—perfectly symmetrical. (False morels, which are not fully hollow, are poisonous.) Morels need to be cooked before being eaten, and a quick sauté in olive oil allows them to shine. Both the stems and the caps are edible and have a meaty, nutty taste.





Creamed Spinach

A healthier take on an iconic dish

1 small onion
4 garlic cloves
1 small bunch of chives
16 ounces baby spinach, rinsed and patted dry
4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, divided use
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
1-1/2 tablespoons white whole wheat flour
1/2 cup milk
1/4 cup half and half
1/4 cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

Nutmeg, to taste
Coarse sea salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

- **Mince the onion**, garlic, and chives in your food processor or by hand. Cut the spinach into small pieces. Heat a large skillet. When hot, add 2 tablespoons olive oil, the onions, garlic, and chives, and sauté over medium heat just until softened but not brown.

- **Add the spinach** one large handful at a time. As one batch wilts, add another. Cook until the spinach

reduces and all its liquid evaporates. Transfer the vegetables to a large bowl.

- **Add the rest** of the olive oil and the butter to the skillet. When the butter melts, whisk in the flour and cook for two minutes, stirring constantly. Slowly whisk in the milk, then the half and half, and finally the cheese. When smooth and creamy, add back the spinach mixture and fold it thoroughly into the cream sauce. Season to taste with a few shavings of nutmeg (use a micro-plane grater for ease), salt, and pepper.
Yields 4 servings

Party-Ready Dipped Strawberries

A glam dessert that's fun to make

This recipe calls for three kinds of chocolate for their varied tastes as well as visual appeal, but you can choose just one or two if you prefer and simply change the proportions: For two types of chocolate, use 6 ounces plus 1-1/2 tablespoons of olive oil for each; for one type, use 12 ounces plus 3 tablespoons olive oil. For a truly spectacular presentation, look for oversized “dipping” strawberries. For a smaller batch, divide the ingredients in half.

4 ounces each dark, milk, and white chocolate

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, divided use

1 quart (32 ounces) fresh strawberries, preferably with stems attached, rinsed and thoroughly patted dry.

- **Melt each type** of chocolate in separate medium-sized glass bowls, one at a time. For each batch, set your microwave at 4-power for 2 minutes, stir, then microwave in 30-second increments until almost melted—the chocolate will fully melt on the counter as you stir it with a spatula. Once melted, whisk in 1 tablespoon olive oil.

- **Place a long** length of wax paper on a rimmed sheet pan. Start by dipping a third of the berries in one type of chocolate; repeat with the second type of chocolate and then move to the third. Add squiggles with a contrasting chocolate: Dip a fork in the leftover white chocolate and wave it



over the milk chocolate-dipped berries; use dark or milk chocolate on the white chocolate-dipped berries, and milk or white chocolate over the dark chocolate ones.

- **Let the chocolate** firm up before serving, about 30 minutes in a cool room. Store any leftovers in the fridge and enjoy within two days.
Yields 8 or more servings



Rum Raisin Ice Cream

A simple prep that delivers complex flavors

Of course, you can make your own ice cream (see Savor the Season: Summer for my olive oil ice cream recipe), folding in the raisin mixture at the very end of churning, but these raisins will elevate store-bought vanilla to new heights. Rum-soaked raisins, drained, will keep in the fridge for about a month, so you can double the recipe for a future use.

1/2 cup golden or Thompson raisins

1/4 cup your favorite dark rum

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil,
plus more for drizzling

2 tablespoons brown sugar

1/2 teaspoon cinnamon, plus more
to taste

1 pint best-quality vanilla ice cream

• **Place the raisins** and rum in a small glass bowl, cover, and let soak on the counter overnight to plump them and infuse them with flavor. Drain the raisins and return them to the bowl. Add the olive oil, brown sugar, and cinnamon and stir until the sugar dissolves.

• **Take the ice** cream out of the freezer and let it soften just enough to be able to stir in the raisins. Return to the freezer for 30 to 60 minutes to firm up slightly. To serve, scoop the ice cream into bowls and drizzle with olive oil.

Yields 4 servings

Petit Pavlovas

Light-as-air meringue shells

Pavlovas are baked meringues that are marshmallow-soft on the inside, making them more fragile than a hard meringue shell that's firm inside and out (same recipe, just a longer baking time). I've included a silky lemon curd recipe, but you can fill them in dozens of ways, from a vanilla custard to vanilla-infused whipped cream to sliced fresh fruit in its own juice.

For the curd:

- 3 large or 5 small lemons
- 2 large eggs, plus 2 yolks
- 10 tablespoons sugar
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla paste or extract
- Pinch of fine sea salt
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

For the meringue shells:

- 2/3 cup egg whites (about 5 extra-large eggs)
- 1-1/2 cups sugar
- 2 teaspoons cornstarch
- 1 teaspoon white vinegar
- 1/3 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Optional garnish: fresh edible flowers or candied lemon peel

• **Make the curd:** Rinse the lemons, dry them thoroughly, and then zest them with a microplane grater to make a generous tablespoon of zest. Juice the lemons to make a generous cup of juice. Some pulp is fine to include, but remove any seeds.



• **In a heavy-bottomed** saucepan, use a silicone whisk to blend the eggs and yolks thoroughly, and then whisk in one ingredient at a time in this order: sugar, cornstarch, lemon juice and zest, vanilla, and salt—this will give you the silkiest results without needing to strain the mixture after cooking.

• **Place the saucepan** over medium heat and continue to whisk as you bring the mixture to a very low boil. Cook for 2 minutes to activate the cornstarch, lowering the heat if necessary to prevent a rapid boil. The curd should be thick enough to coat the whisk.

• **Off the heat**, slowly whisk in the

olive oil until completely blended. Pour the curd into a glass pitcher or jar and allow it to come to room temperature before covering and placing it in the fridge to thicken further. The curd needs to be cold before filling the meringue shells.

• **To make the shells:** Preheat your oven to 225°F and line two baking sheets with parchment paper. In a stand mixer or in a large bowl with an electric mixer, beat the egg whites on medium for 1 minute to break them up, then increase the speed. Once the meringue starts to take shape, add the sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time. After the sugar has all been added, beat for

(continued on next page)

Petit Pavlovas

Light-as-air meringue shells

another 5 minutes on high until the meringue is thick and glossy. Add the cornstarch, vinegar, and vanilla, and beat for just a few seconds to incorporate.

- **Place a dab** of meringue under each corner of the parchment paper to hold it in place. To neatly pipe out the shells, transfer the meringue to a very large pastry bag fitted with a 1-inch round nozzle. Pipe out four 3-inch rounds on each sheet and then add a circle of meringue around the circumference to build the sides of the shells (if you have any meringue left in the bag, squeeze out meringue “kisses” and use them

as a garnish). You can also shape the meringues freehand by using a large spoon to make 3-inch mounds of meringue and then a smaller spoon to push meringue from the center out to the sides.

- **Bake the meringues** for 60 minutes. The outer part of the shell should feel dry to the touch; if sticky, leave them in the oven and check every 10 minutes. Once done, turn off the oven and let them cool inside it for 1 hour, then finish cooling on racks. When completely cool, they can be stored in single layers in airtight tins for 2 or 3 days.

- **To serve, fill** the center of each shell with lemon curd and garnish as desired. *Yields 8 pavlovas*



Ingredient Spotlight: Vanilla

Vanilla comes from the beans, or pods, of the orchid *Vanilla planifolia*, a vine that can grow to nearly 50 feet in length. The most readily available form is **vanilla extract**, the result of steeping ground beans in alcohol (which is why real vanilla extract has a high alcohol content).

Whole vanilla beans are long, thin, brown pods brimming with

seeds that have been dried—but shouldn't be dried out. They offer the most intense vanilla flavor. To release the seeds, score the length of the bean with a sharp paring knife and then use the side of the knife to scrape them all out. Nothing goes to waste: Bury the leftover pod in a jar of sugar to make your own vanilla sugar; it adds depth of flavor to recipes that call for sugar and when used as a sweetener in drinks.

The third option is **vanilla bean**

paste. Think of it as the best of both worlds—a thickened extract brimming with vanilla seeds. It's wonderful when you want a lot of flavor and to see the seeds—perfect for ice creams and puddings. When you don't want flecks, in a pavlova for instance, use extract.

Vanilla bean paste and extract can be used interchangeably, teaspoon for teaspoon. When using vanilla beans, one bean is equal to about 2 teaspoons of extract or paste.

Blueberry Buckle

A tender cake brimming with berries

This is a wonderful dessert you can serve family-style right from the baking dish.

For the crumble topping:

4 ounces unsalted butter, cubed and chilled
1 cup granulated sugar
2/3 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

For the cake:

1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil, plus more for the baking dish
2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup whole wheat pastry flour
1 teaspoon fine sea salt
1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder
8 ounces unsalted butter, at room temperature
2 cups granulated sugar
8 large eggs
2 teaspoons vanilla paste or extract
6-8 cups blueberries or assorted berries, washed, picked over, and patted dry
Optional: confectioners' sugar for a final dusting

- **Make the topping:** Use your hands or a pastry blender to turn the butter, sugar, flour, and cinnamon into small bits, ranging from the size of peas to the size of beans; set aside.

- **Preheat your oven** to 350°F. Lightly brush a 13-inch by 9-inch baking dish with olive oil; set aside. Make the batter: In a large bowl, whisk together the flours, salt, and baking powder. In a stand mixer or in a large bowl with an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugar until fluffy, about 5 minutes. Add the olive oil and beat for another minute, then add eggs, one at a time, beating after each addition to

combine. Add the vanilla and beat for 30 seconds. Gradually add in the flour mixture just until incorporated.

- **Transfer the batter** to the baking dish and use a large offset spatula to level if necessary. Top with an even layer of berries, making sure to get some into the corners of the dish. Crumble the topping over the fruit.

- **Bake until the top** of the cake is golden and the tip of a sharp knife inserted in the center comes out clean, about an hour. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Yields 12 or more servings





Double Chocolate Donuts

Baking makes these a snap

Forget waiting for a yeasted dough to rise and the hassle of deep frying—these oven-baked chocolate treats are ready in just a few minutes. Enjoy them plain, with a dusting of confectioners' sugar, or with this simple yet rich chocolate glaze. Nonstick donut pans, available at housewares stores and online, produce perfect rounds.

For the donuts:

1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
6 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa
1 teaspoon instant espresso powder
3/4 teaspoon baking powder
3/4 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon fine sea salt
2 large eggs
1-1/4 cups sugar
6 tablespoons plain Greek yogurt or Icelandic skyr
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1/2 cup milk
1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla paste or extract

For the glaze:

6 ounces semi-sweet chocolate
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

- **Preheat your oven** to 350°F. Lightly brush two 6-cavity donut pans with olive oil. In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, cocoa, espresso powder, baking powder, baking soda, and salt.
- **In a separate bowl**, whisk the eggs until frothy, then add the sugar and whisk until incorporated. Whisk in the yogurt, olive oil, milk, and vanilla. Fold in the dry ingredients.
- **Use a large spoon** or a pastry bag

fitted with a large plain tip to fill the donut pans. Bake for 10 minutes or until springy to the touch. Allow to cool in the pans, then glaze, if desired.

- **For the glaze**, place 5 ounces of the chocolate in a small, microwave-safe glass bowl and melt at 50% power for 3 minutes; repeat 30 seconds at a time if needed until the chocolate is almost fully melted. Add the last ounce of chocolate and let sit for 2 minutes to cool down; then stir until smooth. Stir in the olive oil until fully blended. Dip the top of each donut into the chocolate and then place on a cookie sheet to firm up. *Yields 12 donuts*

Mini CocoMacs

Flavorful—and gluten-free—bites

Coconut macaroons are cookies with chewy goodness. The outsides crisp best when baked one sheet at a time on your oven's center rack—the following quantity bakes up in two batches. Enjoy them plain, with chopped chocolate added to the batter as a final step for a chocolate chip version, or with the caps dipped into melted chocolate after the cookies cool. This recipe can be doubled for a large crowd or gift-giving.



8 ounces unsweetened (desiccated) coconut flakes

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

1 tablespoon vanilla paste or extract

1/2 teaspoon almond extract

4 large egg whites, at room temperature

Pinch of fine sea salt

1/3 cup sugar

- **Preheat your oven** to 350°F degrees. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper. In a very large bowl, mix the coconut with the oil, melted butter, vanilla, and almond extract.

- **In a stand** mixer or in a very large bowl with an electric mixer, beat the egg whites on medium for 1 minute to break them up, then increase the speed. When foamy, slowly add in the sugar and beat to stiff peaks. Fold the whites into the coconut mixture.

- **Use a 1-inch** mini ice cream scoop to shape the mixture into balls. To make them perfectly round, use a finger to wipe any stray flakes from the edge of the scoop before you release onto the cookie sheet.

- **Bake for 8** minutes, rotate the cookie sheet, and bake another 8 minutes or until light brown. Repeat with the next batch of cookies.

Yields 40 cookies

Rave Reviews for Fresh-Pressed Olive Oil

Here's what Club members are saying...

"I have died and gone to Italy!!! I love the olive oils. Drizzled over freshly steamed vegetables, blended with fresh parsley and lemon served atop a grilled veal chop or steak, it's amazing and I want more...I've used it on salad, my homemade grill 'Lahvish' pizza, fresh figs stuffed with gorgonzola, my white bean and rosemary/garlic dip, served on a garlic rubbed baguette, and more. Can you feel the love? What else can I say, the love goes on ... and on ... thank you!!!!!!!!!!!!!" —*Jennifer L. Gower, Newport, RI*

"Yes, yes, yes, it was that mind-blowing and more! We usually just use the oil for dipping, and I pour it over feta cheese. As soon as you open the bottle the aroma is fantastic. It reminds me of when I was a little girl and my grandfather came back from Greece and he brought back olive oil just like that. It had that dark green color and smell. Please if I can buy more please let me know."

—*Diane Vourderis, Staten Island, NY*

"Had a little gathering on Super Bowl Sunday. Lined up the three bottles you sent and put a little of each in dipping dishes. Served with sour dough bread chunks. It was the most loved munchie we had. Many different opinions on which oil was the best, but a unanimous 'best olive oils ever' for the set of three. Makes a plain old ordinary salad sing. I had bought two additional sets of bottles for gifts, and both of the recipients would like to know how to get more of this liquid gold. It is so nice to have you scouring the earth for me. Thanks." —*Annie Osteen, Copperopolis, CA*

"Wow. I gave two sets as gifts. The folks loved it. Drizzled on tomatoes, mozzarella & basil, a hit. I've made the best salad dressing ever. Nice to have 3 choices. It's now my surprise ingredient."

—*Cynthia Cable, Rochester, NY*

"As a professional cook, caterer, and recipe developer in NYC, I am always on the hunt for the freshest and best-quality ingredients. There is simply nothing available for purchase online, or in any specialty market anywhere, that comes close to the quality of your olive oils. Every season I eagerly await my next shipment of your olive oils, and each time I am surprised and delighted. Your oils are my go-to condiment of choice and my 'secret weapon'—I use them to finish almost every dish I make. Their vibrancy and freshness make everything I cook come alive. I can't wait to see what's coming next." —*Jill P., New York, NY*

"The oil arrived yesterday and I opened it and used it on my salad. Words cannot describe. I am delighted and look forward to receiving more oil in the future. Thank you for sourcing this out and making it available. Pssst—since no one else was around, I even licked my plate clean—yummy!" —*Joy C., Salem, OR*

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