

COOKIN' WITH TIDBITS

APRIL 21, 2020



Oriental Chicken Express

Today, Chinese dishes are almost as American as apple pie! This filling main dish is no exception.

1 1/4 cups diagonally sliced celery
1/2 cup chopped green bell pepper
1/4 cup diced green onion
1 (16-ounce) can fat-free chicken broth
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon reduced-sodium soy sauce
1 1/2 cups diced cooked chicken breast
1 (8-ounce) can sliced water chestnuts, drained
1 (8-ounce) can pineapple chunks, packed in fruit juice, drained
3 cups hot cooked rice

1. In a large skillet sprayed with butter-flavored cooking spray, sauté celery, green pepper and onion just until tender. In a covered jar, combine chicken broth and flour. Shake well to blend. Pour broth mixture into skillet with vegetables. Stir in soy sauce.

2. Continue cooking over medium heat, until mixture starts to thicken, stirring often. Add chicken, water chestnuts and pineapple. Mix well to combine. Lower heat and simmer for 5 minutes or until mixture is heated through, stirring often.

3. For each serving, spoon 1/2 cup hot rice on a plate and spoon about 1 cup chicken mixture over top. Serves 6.

• Each serving equals: 214 calories, 2g fat, 16g protein, 33g carb., 298mg sodium, 2g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 1 1/2 Starch, 1 1/2 Meat, 1 Vegetable.

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Spaghetti Pie With Prosciutto and Peas

8 ounces thick spaghetti
4 large eggs
2 large egg whites
1 container (15 ounces) part-skim ricotta cheese
3/4 cup reduced-fat (2 percent) milk
1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
Salt and ground black pepper
1 tablespoon margarine or butter
1 bunch green onions cut into 1/4-inch pieces (about 1 cup)
1 cup frozen peas
6 slices thinly sliced prosciutto (about 3 ounces)

1. Heat oven to 350 F. Heat large covered saucepot of water to boiling over high heat. Add spaghetti and cook 2 minutes less than label directs. 2. Meanwhile, in medium bowl, whisk eggs, egg whites, ricotta, milk, nutmeg, 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper until blended. Set aside. In oven-safe nonstick 12-inch skillet, melt margarine over medium heat. Add green onions and cook about 5 minutes or until softened. Remove skillet from heat. 3. Drain spaghetti. To green onions in skillet, add spaghetti and frozen peas; toss to combine. Pour egg mixture over pasta and arrange Prosciutto slices on top.

4. Place skillet over medium-high heat and cook 3 to 5 minutes or until edges just begin to set. Place skillet in oven and bake 15 minutes or until center is set. Slide pie onto large plate to serve. Serves 6.

• Each serving: About 535 calories, 13g total fat (4g saturated), 68mg cholesterol, 350mg sodium, 65g total carbohydrate, 6g dietary fiber, 36g protein.

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Prosciutto-Wrapped Asparagus

Delicate, succulent asparagus is the perfect foil for salty prosciutto. You can assemble these early in the day and bake them at the very last minute.

24 spears thick asparagus, trimmed and peeled
12 slices (5 ounces) thin prosciutto
1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
1/4 teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper

1. In 5-quart Dutch oven, heat 3 quarts water to boiling over high heat. Add asparagus; cook 3 minutes to blanch. Drain; rinse with cold running water. Pat dry with paper towels.

2. Preheat oven to 450 F. Working in batches, spread prosciutto on cutting board; cut each slice lengthwise in half and separate slightly. Evenly sprinkle 1 teaspoon Parmesan on each prosciutto strip. Place 1 asparagus spear at end of 1 strip; wrap prosciutto in spiral along length of asparagus (don't cover asparagus tip). Transfer to jelly-roll pan. Repeat with remaining prosciutto, Parmesan and asparagus. Sprinkle with pepper. If not serving right away, cover and refrigerate up to 6 hours.

3. Bake prosciutto-wrapped asparagus 10 minutes. Transfer to paper towels to drain. Arrange on platter and serve warm. Makes 24 appetizers.

• Each appetizer: About 28 calories, 2g total fat (1g saturated), 6mg sodium, 148mg sodium, 1g total carbohydrate, 3g protein.

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The Kitchen Diva!

by Angela Shelf Medearis



Prep Your Pantry for Uncertain Times

Whether you've been hit with lockdowns and quarantines, work and school closures, bad weather or power outages, or you just need to stock your pantry for the times you're unable to shop, here are some ways to create an emergency pantry using canned goods as staples.

A typical emergency pantry:

- Dried and/or evaporated milk
- Pasta, rice, cereals, crackers
- Jars of processed cheese spread
- Granola bars, Pop Tarts
- Canned fruits and vegetables
- Canned meats and fish (chicken, ham, tuna)
- Canned fruit, vegetable juices
- Peanut butter
- Canned bean, potato salad
- Unsalted nuts
- Canned baked beans
- Canned chili, hash, spaghetti, soup
- Dried fruits
- Instant beverages
- Baby food and formula (if needed)

Additional supplies:

- Non-electric can opener
- Paper towels
- Foil
- Medications (prescription and nonprescription) that family uses on a regular basis
- Paper goods (toilet paper and tissues), napkins, plates, bowls, cups
- Plastic cutlery
- Bar soap (if sanitizers or liquid soaps are unavailable)
- Food and water for pets

Many people have questions about selecting and storing canned goods. First, start with a quality product. Choose cans that are not rusted, dented, scratched or bulging. Home-canned foods should only be made using

research-tested procedures, equipment and recipes from sources such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture website. Here are some tips for creating and stocking an emergency pantry:

- Choose foods your family enjoys. Good options include low-sodium canned beans, vegetables, fruit (packed in fruit juice), breakfast cereal, peanut butter, pouches of fully cooked whole grains, nuts, whole-wheat crackers and shelf-stable milk or plant milk (the kind sold in aseptic boxes in the grocery aisle).
- When buying canned foods, choose low-sodium or no-salt-added products and choose fruits packed in their own juice or water instead of syrup.



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- Store canned goods in a cool, dark, dry area away from furnaces, pipes and other places where temperature changes occur. Store metal cans off the floor because moisture may lead to rust.

- Always use the FIFO (first-in, first-out) method when it comes to taking foods from storage so that you are sure to use your oldest cans first. If you see that a can or jar has a broken seal or is rusting, bulging or dented, discard it. If any food does not look or smell right, throw it out.

- Keep at least six gallons of water per family member to be prepared for one week. Store water in airtight, food-grade storage containers. Replace water every six months.

Here are a few recipes using ingredients that should be in every emergency pantry — grains and beans! Beans and grains are nutrient dense, packed with protein, versatile and are very filling. These no-cook emergency pantry recipes, courtesy of Trisha Calvo, a writer for Consumer Reports, are simple and easy to prepare.

NO-COOK EMERGENCY PANTRY RECIPES

Overnight Oats — Mix rolled oats with water and let sit overnight on a counter. In the morning, add peanut butter, raisins or other dried fruit, and a little cinnamon.

Power Bean and Grain Bowl or Wrap — Combine drained canned beans with a pouch of precooked grains, drained canned corn, olive oil and any vegetables, herbs and spices you like. This dish also makes a delicious filling for a wrap, tortilla or pita bread.

Salmon or Tuna Stuffed Avocados — Combine chunks of canned salmon, tuna or canned smoked trout with chopped tomato and cucumber. Toss with a dressing of lemon juice or white vinegar, olive oil, paprika, and salt and pepper. Stuff in avocado halves, use to top lettuce greens or as a sandwich filling.

Chunky Gazpacho — Combine a can of diced tomatoes with the juice, chopped onion, chopped cucumber, a little Tabasco sauce or cayenne pepper, and a dash of salt and pepper. You also can add chopped red or green peppers if you have them. Drizzle with olive oil and top with fresh parsley or cilantro if available. To make this a heartier dish, add a can of chickpeas (drained).

Corn Salad — Combine drained canned corn with any vegetables you have on hand (tomatoes, peppers and onions, for example), chopped. Add drained canned black beans if you like. Toss with a dressing made of 1 part apple cider vinegar and 1 part olive oil, fresh or dried basil, and a little salt and pepper.

Angela Shelf Medearis is an award-winning children's author, culinary historian and the author of seven cookbooks. Her new cookbook is "The Kitchen Diva's Diabetic Cookbook." Her website is www.divapro.com. To see how-to videos, recipes and much, much more, Like Angela Shelf Medearis, The Kitchen Diva! on Facebook. Recipes may not be reprinted without permission from Angela Shelf Medearis.

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