

Feeding Yourself at Home

Weekly Meal Plan

May 8, 2024

For this meal plan, I have provided you with four dinner recipes to make which you can rotate to feed yourself and your family all week long. I'm very much a "feelings cook". Some days I want to cook because it's a nice way to flex creativity at the end of a long day. On other days, I want to spend as little time as possible over the stove. I've gotten pretty good at assessing my energy levels based on what my days will look like, so I rotate meals accordingly.

The way I have these meals planned out is how I've found to reduce the most waste and save my energy. My energy levels are higher at the beginning of the week, so I do my more hands-on meals then. I also make meals with the freshest ingredients as close to grocery shopping day as possible. Adapt this however you need to.

I almost always do a big fridge clean-out meal on Fridays or Saturdays before adding new groceries to the fridge. This helps me use up what I have. It ends up being a bit of a hodge podge, but I don't mind. I love that my fridge is almost empty by the end of the week. For this meal, we'll do some sheet pan with protein and veggies, make a big soup, or make some sort of bowl with rice or greens.

Whatever is leftover at that point goes into the freezer. I dice up veggies and freeze them at the end of the week. It's beyond frustrating to throw food (and money) away, so a great way to save yourself in the future is to chop up whatever you have left and freeze it. Then, the next time you need that ingredient you have it handy!

When utilizing the meal plan, keep your kitchen basics stocked. I consider basics as oils, butter, sugar, flour, baking powder, salt, pepper, basic seasonings like oregano, paprika, cumin, etc., milk, cornstarch, and kinds of vinegar. Be sure to review the grocery list each week to ensure you have what you need on hand, but once you have these items stocked you should be good for a while!

That said, **USE WHAT YOU HAVE ON HAND!** If you notice I have listed a recipe that calls for an ingredient and you have a close replacement, please use what you have to save the money! I will always provide options for ingredients that you can substitute (or leave out completely 😊) that won't compromise the flavor of the dish.

Some recipes will be gluten-free or dairy-free, but if they are not, I will try to also provide alternatives so you can keep in line with those guidelines if necessary. This will affect the cost of the meals. Also, I will go ahead and say that 99% of my dinner options will include a meat protein. We are meat eaters and rarely have a dinner that does not include meat. However, I will also provide tips on how to make meals vegetarian-friendly.

I will provide a cost breakdown for each meal. This will primarily be done at Walmart, as it is fairly accessible. Additionally, I have provided links to pre-filled carts with everything you need to make these meals for the week! The pre-filled carts are built out in the Walmart app. You can either click on or copy and paste the link to your phone/computer. Once you open the link it will show you the full grocery list pre-shopped. At this point, you can browse through and see if there is anything on the list you already have and don't need to purchase for the week. After that, you can either individually add the items you need to your cart or add the entire pre-shopped list to your cart for checkout. I always build these carts with cost in mind, meaning you won't find organic or high-end brands; my goal is always to get you the lowest price possible. If you want to swap brands out or opt for the organic version of an item, you can do so! Walmart grocery has pick-up and delivery available through their website so you can decide which method is best for you.

I have also created lists for individual recipes and linked them. If you ever want to add them to a future order or if you want to skip a meal this week and add the others, you can do so!

This Week's Menu

Day 1

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
French Toast Roll Ups	Broccoli Salad	Shredded Beef Enchiladas

Day 2

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
French Toast Roll Ups	Shredded Beef Enchiladas	Spaghetti with Fresh Tomato and Basil

Day 3

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
French Toast Roll Ups	Spaghetti with Fresh Tomato and Basil	Leftovers

Day 4

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
French Toast Roll Ups	Broccoli Salad	Cashew Chicken Lettuce Wraps

Day 5

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Biscuits and Gravy Casserole	Cashew Chicken Lettuce Wraps	BBQ Pulled Pork Sandwiches

Day 6

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Biscuits and Gravy Casserole	Slow Cooker Chicken Tacos	BBQ Pulled Pork Sandwiches

Day 7

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Fridge Clean Out	Slow Cooker Chicken Tacos	Fridge Clean Out

Keep Stocked

Keep your kitchen basics stocked. I recommend buying these things in bulk when you can to lower your costs. I won't include these items on the grocery list each week since they all typically last a long time, so be sure you look at the ingredient lists each week and confirm that you have what you need on hand. Here are the items I consider the basics for making your meals:

- Milk
- Garlic
- Oils
- Butter
- White and brown sugar
- Honey
- Maple syrup
- Flour
- Baking powder
- Cornstarch
- Baking soda
- Vinegar – white, apple cider, red wine, white wine, rice wine
- Dry seasonings like cumin, chili powder, oregano, etc.
- Other basics like salt and pepper

Grocery List

Before adding all these items to your cart, go through your pantry and fridge to see what you already have or what you could substitute. I have included substitutions for all ingredients in the recipes with items you most likely already have on hand. I also included more convenience items in the recipes, so if you're not interested in making the dressing make sure you add those as well.

Cost Breakdown: \$152.38 total

[Add all items to your Walmart cart](#)

PRODUCE

- 2 yellow onions
- 1 red onion
- 1 cucumber
- 7oz bibb lettuce
- 10oz shredded carrots
- 1.5oz basil
- 6lbs plum tomatoes
- 6 limes
- 4 broccoli crowns
- 1lb strawberries

PANTRY

- Liquid smoke
- BBQ sauce
- Unsalted cashews
- 32oz beef broth
- 2 32oz chicken broth
- Italian salad dressing
- Mayonnaise
- Bacon pieces
- Sunflower kernels
- Dried cranberries
- Peppered gravy mix
- Nutella

REFRIGERATED

- 8oz Parmesan cheese
- 8oz shredded Monterey Jack cheese
- 8oz shredded mild cheddar cheese
- 1 can of refrigerated biscuit dough (8 biscuits)
- 12 large eggs
- 8oz cream cheese

CANNED GOODS

- 10oz diced tomatoes with green chilies

BREADS & GRAINS

- 2lbs dry spaghetti
- 15-count flour tortillas
- 10-count corn tortillas
- White bread loaf

PROTEIN

- 4lbs fresh pork shoulder
- 2.5lbs chuck roast
- 4lbs boneless skinless chicken breast
- 1lb pork breakfast sausage

French Toast Roll-Ups

Recipe by: [The Girl Who Ate Everything](#)

Cost Breakdown: \$12.00 total, \$0.75/serving

Servings: 16

Prep Time: 5 Minutes

Cook Time: 10 Minutes

Total Time: 15 Minutes

TOOLS

- [Cutting board](#)
- Chef's knife
- Rolling pin or a clean bottle as a makeshift rolling pin
- 2 shallow bowls
- Whisk

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Cut the crust from each slice of bread and flatten it out with a rolling pin.
2. Place about 1-2 teaspoons of your chosen filling 1 inch from one end of the bread in a strip. Roll the bread up tightly and repeat with the remaining pieces of bread. I really like cream cheese with diced strawberries as one combination and Nutella with diced strawberries as another combination.
3. In a shallow bowl whisk the eggs and milk until well combined.
4. In a separate shallow bowl mix the sugar with the cinnamon.
5. Heat a skillet set over medium heat and melt a tablespoon of butter.
6. Dip each bread roll in the egg mixture coating well and then place them in the pan seam side down. Cook in batches until golden brown, turning them to cook and brown on all sides, about 2 minutes per side. Add butter to the pan as needed.
7. Add cooked rolls immediately from the pan to the cinnamon sugar and roll until completely covered in sugar. You can serve with syrup for dipping but I think they're perfectly good all by themselves.

NOTES

- The recipe can be stored in the refrigerator for 3-4 days. To freeze, portion out leftovers as desired. When reheating from frozen, it's best to thaw in the refrigerator overnight before reheating using one of the methods mentioned earlier. Properly frozen, it should maintain its quality for 2-3 months.
- Gluten-free: To make this recipe gluten-free, you'll need to substitute the white sandwich bread with gluten-free bread. You can easily find gluten-free bread at most grocery stores these days. Additionally, ensure that the other ingredients you use, such as cream cheese, strawberries, Nutella, eggs, milk, sugar, cinnamon, and butter, are all gluten-free or do not contain any hidden sources of gluten. Always double-check labels to be sure. Once you have gluten-free bread and gluten-free ingredients, you can follow the same recipe steps as before. Enjoy your gluten-free French toast!
- Dairy-free:

- Medium non-stick skillet

INGREDIENTS

- 16 slices white sandwich bread
- Softened cream cheese, diced strawberries, or Nutella
- 4 eggs
- 6 tablespoons milk
- 2/3 cup granulated sugar
- 2 heaping teaspoons ground cinnamon
- butter, for greasing the pan

- **Replace Milk:** Substitute the milk with a dairy-free alternative such as almond milk, soy milk, oat milk, or coconut milk. Any of these options will work well in the recipe.
- **Choose Dairy-Free Fillings:** Opt for dairy-free fillings like diced strawberries, Nutella (check for dairy-free versions), or dairy-free cream cheese alternatives. There are many dairy-free cream cheese options available made from ingredients like soy, almonds, or cashews.
- **Use Dairy-Free Butter:** Instead of using butter for greasing the pan, you can use a dairy-free butter substitute or a neutral oil like canola oil or coconut oil.

SUBSTITUTIONS

- **WHITE BREAD:** For this recipe, you'll want to use a flexible bread. While something like sourdough would be great for regular French toast, I wouldn't use it here. Whole wheat bread would be a great replacement.
- **FILLING:** Use whatever you have on hand! Cream cheese, strawberries, and Nutella are great but you could also use nuts, other fresh fruit, sausage, bacon, peanut butter, etc.
- **EGGS:** Use ¼ cup unsweetened applesauce to sub out the egg.
- **MILK:** Any dairy-free milk alternative would be great!
- **SUGAR & CINNAMON:** You can skip the cinnamon sugar if you don't have either of these ingredients on hand. But if you'd like to make it using alternative ingredients, you can make a spiced sweet seasoning using nutmeg, allspice, clove, stevia, and a pinch of salt.
- **BUTTER:** Any spray oil would work here as well! I love using the Trader Joe's coconut oil when making pancakes and French toast.

Biscuits and Gravy Casserole with Sausage and Eggs

Recipe by: [Scattered Thoughts of a Crafty Mom](#)

Cost Breakdown: \$10.99 total, \$1.37/serving

Servings: 8

Prep Time: 20 Minutes

Cook Time: 45 Minutes

Total Time: 65 Minutes

TOOLS

- [13x9 baking dish](#)
- [Large skillet](#)
- Kitchen shears
- Shallow bowl
- Whisk

INGREDIENTS

- 8-count package of biscuit dough (we used Pillsbury Grands, which are slightly bigger)
- 6 eggs
- 1 (2 3/4 ounce) package of peppered gravy mix (makes 2 cups)
- 1 lb pork sausage, any flavor
- 1 cup cheese, shredded
- 1/2 cup milk
- salt and pepper to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350. Grease a 13×9 pan
2. Brown the sausage in skillet and drain thoroughly.
3. Cut biscuit dough into 1" pieces, and line the bottom of the pan.
4. Layer cooked sausage over the biscuit pieces.
5. Layer shredded cheese over sausage.
6. Whisk eggs and milk, add salt and pepper and pour over biscuit/layers.
7. Make gravy according to instructions and pour over everything.
8. Bake for 35-45 minutes, or until eggs and biscuits are cooked through. (read tips above)
9. Serve warm (leftovers are excellent too!)

NOTES

- If you choose to prepare this the night before, you will need to increase the cooking time by about 20 minutes. (Keep your eye on it, you want to make sure the biscuits cook all the way and the eggs set completely. If you find your casserole is getting too brown for your taste, cover with a foil tent to keep it from browning too much more.)
- If you find your casserole is getting too brown for your taste, cover with a foil tent to keep it from browning too much more.)
- Love gravy? – Consider doubling the amount used (or just to keep some on the side.)
- Gluten-free:

- **Gluten-Free Biscuit Dough:** Look for gluten-free biscuit dough at your local grocery store. Many brands offer gluten-free versions of biscuit dough that you can use as a substitute. Alternatively, you can make your own gluten-free biscuit dough using a gluten-free flour blend. There are plenty of recipes available online for gluten-free biscuits.
- **Gluten-Free Gravy Mix:** Similarly, you'll need to find a gluten-free gravy mix. Check the labels carefully, as some gravy mixes contain wheat flour as a thickening agent. Look for brands that specifically state they are gluten-free, or you can make your own gluten-free gravy using gluten-free flour (such as rice flour or cornstarch) as a thickener.
- **Other Ingredients:** Ensure that all other ingredients, such as eggs, pork sausage, cheese, milk, salt, and pepper, are naturally gluten-free. Double-check labels to ensure there are no hidden sources of gluten in these ingredients.
- **Dairy-free:**
 - **Dairy-Free Gravy Mix:** Find a dairy-free gravy mix or make your own dairy-free gravy using a recipe that uses dairy-free ingredients. Look for gravy mixes that are specifically labeled as dairy-free, or you can make your own using ingredients like vegetable broth, dairy-free butter, and gluten-free flour as a thickener.
 - **Dairy-Free Cheese:** Substitute the shredded cheese with a dairy-free alternative. There are many dairy-free cheese options available made from ingredients like coconut oil, soy, almonds, or cashews. Choose a dairy-free cheese that melts well and has a flavor you enjoy.
 - **Dairy-Free Milk:** Replace the milk with a dairy-free alternative such as almond milk, soy milk, oat milk, coconut milk, or any other non-dairy milk of your choice. Choose an unsweetened variety for savory recipes like this one.
 - **Other Ingredients:** Ensure that all other ingredients, such as eggs, pork sausage, salt, and pepper, are naturally dairy-free.
- **Vegetarian:**
 - **Vegetarian Sausage:** Instead of using pork sausage, you can use vegetarian sausage crumbles or patties. There are many options available at grocery stores made from ingredients like soy, mushrooms, or lentils. Choose your favorite vegetarian sausage substitute and cook it according to the package instructions.
 - **Vegetarian Gravy Mix:** Ensure that the gravy mix you use is vegetarian-friendly. Many gravy mixes are vegetarian, but it's always a good idea to check the ingredients to make sure there are no animal-derived ingredients.

SUBSTITUTIONS

- **BISCUIT DOUGH:** The recipe calls for store-bought biscuit dough, but you can also make your own. [This is a great, easy biscuit recipe!](#) You can also use puff pastry for a flakier texture.
- **PEPPERED GRAVY MIX:** Honestly, as much as I'd like to make this as easy as possible I'd probably end up making my own gravy. It comes together so quickly. [Here's how I make my own.](#)
- **PORK SAUSAGE:** Use a breakfast sausage or you could alternatively use bacon to get the grease. Be careful not to let it burn though.
- **MILK:** Any dairy-free milk alternative would be great!

Broccoli Salad

Recipe by: [Spend with Pennies](#)

Cost Breakdown: \$17.06 total, \$2.13/serving

Servings: 8

Prep Time: 20 Minutes

Chill Time: 1 Hour

Total Time: 1 Hour 20 Minutes

TOOLS

- [Medium bowl](#)
- Whisk
- [Cutting board](#)
- Chef's knife
- ½ cup dried cranberries
- ¼ cup sunflower seeds
- ½ cup bacon bits

INGREDIENTS

- 8 cups broccoli cut into bite-sized pieces
- ⅓ cup red onion diced
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 3 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- salt & pepper to taste

Dressing

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Whisk together the dressing ingredients in a medium bowl. Set aside.
2. In a large bowl, combine broccoli, onion, cranberries, sunflower seeds, and bacon bits. Pour the prepared dressing over and mix well.
3. Refrigerate for at least one hour before serving.

NOTES

- Broccoli Salad can be made ahead & kept in the fridge (at least an hour but up to 24 hours) until ready to serve.
- Leftovers will last about 4-5 days in the fridge.
- Dry broccoli very well so moisture doesn't water down the dressing. Broccoli does not need to be cooked for this recipe.
- Reserve some crisp bacon for garnish if desired and add just before serving.
- Store-bought coleslaw dressing can replace the homemade dressing if desired.
- Gluten-free:
 - Use gluten-free mayonnaise, which is widely available in stores. Most mayonnaise brands are gluten-free, but it's a good idea to double-check the label to be sure.
 - Substitute cider vinegar with a gluten-free vinegar such as distilled white vinegar or rice vinegar.
- Dairy-free:
 - Dairy-Free Mayonnaise: Use a dairy-free mayonnaise alternative. There are many brands of dairy-free mayo available at grocery stores, typically made from ingredients like soy, canola oil, or avocado oil. Check the labels to ensure they are dairy-free.
 - Dairy-Free Cheese Alternative: If you'd like to add a cheesy flavor to the salad, you can use a dairy-free cheese alternative. Look for dairy-free shredded cheese or crumbles made from ingredients like soy, nuts, or tapioca starch.

- Vegetarian: You can find vegetarian bacon bits at some grocery stores or online retailers. These are often made from soy or textured vegetable protein (TVP) and flavored to resemble bacon. Alternatively, you can make your own vegetarian bacon bits by crisping up thinly sliced tempeh or coconut flakes seasoned with smoked paprika, liquid smoke, soy sauce, or tamari.

SUBSTITUTIONS

- RED ONION: Shallots would be a great alternative and have less bite to them than red onions do.
- DRIED CRANBERRIES: Use dried cherries, dried apricots, or raisins instead!
- SUNFLOWER SEEDS: Pepitas, sliced almonds, chopped pecans or walnuts, or hemp seeds would also work in this recipe!

*NOTE: I have often skipped buying my own individual ingredients for the “toppings” and have instead bought one of these [salad toppers](#). They are the perfect size for this recipe and are so good!

- BACON BITS: You can leave out the bacon if you’d like.
- MAYO: Greek yogurt would also work if you don’t have or like mayo.
- CIDER VINEGAR: White wine vinegar, red wine vinegar, or rice vinegar would be great substitutions here. You just need a little acidity to balance everything out!
- SUGAR: Add sweetness using honey or maple syrup, stevia, coconut sugar, or agave nectar.

Slow Cooker Chicken Tacos

Cost Breakdown: \$15.18 total, \$1.89/serving

Servings: 8

Prep Time: 25 Minutes

Chill Time: 3 Hours 20 Minutes

Total Time: 3 Hours 25 Minutes

TOOLS

- Slow cooker

- 1 teaspoon salt and freshly ground black pepper

INGREDIENTS

- 2 pounds of boneless skinless chicken breasts, or thighs
- 1 cup low-sodium chicken broth (or use salsa)
- 2/3 cup Italian salad dressing (or use salsa)
- 6 teaspoons fresh lime juice
- 6 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 ½ teaspoons onion powder
- 1 ½ teaspoon EACH garlic powder, paprika, cumin

For Serving

- 8 corn tortillas, or 4 flour tortillas
- Desired toppings: shredded lettuce or cabbage, shredded cheese, Salsa or hot sauce, Pico de Gallo, guacamole, onion, cilantro, lime wedges

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Add chicken to slow cooker.
2. Whisk the remaining ingredients in a small bowl and pour over the chicken.
3. Cover and cook on LOW for about 3-4 hours (or 4-5 hours for chicken thighs).
4. Shred chicken. Cook for 30 more minutes.
5. Serve in flour or corn tortillas, with desired toppings. Or, use shredded taco chicken for enchiladas, quesadillas, tostadas, burritos, taco salads etc.

NOTES

- **Make Ahead Instructions:** The shredded chicken can be made up to 2 days in advance. Store in a sealed container in the refrigerator and heat before using.
- **Freezing Instructions:** Freeze the shredded chicken in an airtight freezer safe container or bag for up to 3 months. Thaw in the refrigerator overnight before reheating.
- **Instant Pot Instructions:** Season the chicken with spices and place in the bottom of the instant pot. Cover with lime juice and 1 cup salsa (or use broth and Italian dressing). Cook on Manual, High Pressure, for 8 minutes. Quick release the pressure and carefully remove the lid. Shred chicken.
- **Gluten-free:** Instead of Italian salad dressing, you can use a gluten-free Italian salad dressing or simply make your own with olive oil, vinegar, and Italian seasoning.
- **Vegetarian:**
 - **Replace the Chicken:** Instead of using chicken, you can use a plant-based protein such as tofu, tempeh, or a meat substitute like textured vegetable protein (TVP) or seitan. You'll want to use

about 2 pounds of your chosen vegetarian protein, cut into bite-sized pieces or crumbled, depending on the type you choose.

- Low-Sodium Vegetable Broth or Salsa: Replace the low-sodium chicken broth with an equal amount of low-sodium vegetable broth. Alternatively, you can use salsa as suggested.

SUBSTITUTIONS

- CHICKEN BROTH: Use water with vegetable bouillon cubes or powder.
- ITALIAN SALAD DRESSING: Make your own Italian dressing or use lemon juice with herbs and garlic.
- CHILI POWDER: Ancho chili powder, chipotle chili powder, cayenne pepper, and paprika would all be great alternatives.
- LIME: To add brightness, use lemon juice, vinegar, or orange juice.
- ONION POWDER: Use fresh onion or shallots.
- GARLIC POWDER: You could also use minced garlic or garlic salt (adjust salt in the recipe accordingly).
- PAPRIKA: Cayenne pepper or other varieties of paprika like smoked paprika or sweet paprika would be great options.
- CUMIN: Ground coriander has a similar flavor profile and would be a great alternative!

Shredded Beef Enchiladas

Recipe by: [Tastes Better From Scratch](#)

Cost Breakdown: \$25.71 total, \$2.57/serving

Servings: 10

Prep Time: 20 Minutes

Cook Time: 8 Hours

Total Time: 8 Hours 20 Minutes

TOOLS

- [Slow cooker](#)
- [Medium bowl](#)
- Whisk
- [Medium saucepan](#)
- [9x13 baking dish](#)

INGREDIENTS

- 2 1/2 pounds chuck roast
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2 cups low-sodium beef broth
- 1 cup salsa, your favorite kind, or substitute a can of diced tomatoes with green chiles
- 1 1/2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- 2 Tablespoons cornstarch + 2 Tablespoons waters, mixed together to make a cornstarch slurry
- 10-12 flour tortillas, or 12-15 corn tortillas (warmed on a dry hot skillet first)
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Season the roast on all sides with salt and pepper and place it in the bottom of your slow cooker.
2. Whisk together beef broth, salsa, cumin, chili powder, oregano, onion powder, and garlic powder. Pour over roast.
3. Cover and cook on LOW for 8 hours or until beef is tender and shreds easily. Remove roast to a large plate and shred.
4. Pour the sauce from the slow cooker into a saucepan over medium heat. Slowly whisk in cornstarch slurry. Cook for a few minutes until the sauce begins to thicken. Taste and add additional salt and pepper, or other seasonings, if needed.
5. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
6. Pour 1/2 cup of sauce over the beef and toss. Fill each tortilla with a spoonful of shredded beef and shredded cheese. Roll up and place in the pan, seam-side down.
7. Pour the desired amount of sauce over the enchiladas. Top with remaining cheese. Bake for 30 minutes, until bubbly.
8. Serve topped with optional garnishes of pico de gallo, sour cream, avocado, chopped cilantro or green onions, and a side of Authentic Mexican Rice.

NOTES

- Instant Pot: Prepare the beef and sauce according to recipe instructions. Add them to the Instant Pot and cook on Manual/High Pressure for 75 minutes, with a 10 minute natural release. Proceed with recipe instructions for assembling and baking enchiladas.
- Freezing Instructions: Prepared enchiladas can be frozen for up to 3 months, before baking. Thaw overnight in the fridge and then bake as instructed, or bake from frozen, covered in aluminum foil for about 1 hour 20 minutes, then uncover and bake for an additional 20-30 minutes or until warm and bubbly.

I prefer to freeze the sauce separately, pouring it into a container from the slow cooker, to prevent the tortillas from getting soggy. Assemble the enchiladas but don't pour the sauce on top. Cover with aluminum foil. Thaw sauce and enchiladas overnight in the fridge. Warm the sauce in a saucepan and thicken with cornstarch, then pour over enchiladas and bake as instructed.

- Gluten-free: Instead of using flour tortillas, use gluten-free tortillas made from corn or other gluten-free grains. Many grocery stores carry gluten-free tortillas, or you can make your own using a gluten-free recipe.
- Dairy-free: Substitute the shredded cheddar cheese and shredded Monterey Jack cheese with dairy-free cheese alternatives. There are many dairy-free cheese options available made from ingredients like coconut oil, soy, almonds, or cashews. Look for dairy-free cheese that melts well and has a flavor you enjoy.
- Vegetarian:
 - Vegetarian Protein Substitute: Instead of using chuck roast, you can use a plant-based protein alternative. Some options include:
 - Textured vegetable protein (TVP) or soy crumbles
 - Diced tofu or tempeh
 - Canned or cooked beans (such as black beans, kidney beans, or pinto beans)
 - Quinoa or lentilsChoose the option that best suits your preferences and dietary needs. If using canned beans, be sure to drain and rinse them before adding them to the recipe.
 - Vegetable Broth: Substitute the low-sodium beef broth with vegetable broth to maintain the flavor profile of the dish while keeping it vegetarian-friendly.

SUBSTITUTIONS

- CHUCK ROAST: Beef brisket, sirloin, stew meat or short ribs would all be excellent substitutions.
- BEEF BROTH: If you don't have beef broth, use vegetable broth, chicken broth, or water + soy sauce or Worcestershire sauce for depth of flavor.
- SEASONINGS: Instead of making your own seasoning blend, use a taco seasoning packet.
- SHREDDED CHEESE: Other cheeses that would work here are Pepper Jack, Colby Jack, and Queso fresco.

Spaghetti with Fresh Tomato and Basil Sauce

Recipe by: [NYT Cooking](#)

Cost Breakdown: \$22.64 total, \$2.83/serving

Servings: 8

Total Time: 40 Minutes

TOOLS

- [Stockpot](#)
- Colander
- [Large bowl](#)
- [Large skillet](#)
- Potato masher

- 6 ounces olive oil
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
- 2 pinches crushed red pepper flakes
- 2 pounds of dry spaghetti
- 4 ounces extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 12 leaves fresh basil, shredded
- 4 tablespoons freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

INGREDIENTS

- 6 pounds fresh plum tomatoes, blanched, peeled, seeded and quartered

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Blanch the tomatoes and remove the skins. Cut in half lengthwise and scoop out the seeds. Cut the tomatoes crosswise. Set aside in a bowl.
2. Heat 3 ounces of olive oil in a large, deep skillet over medium-high heat until it smokes slightly. Add tomatoes, salt, pepper, and crushed red pepper. Since the tomatoes will reduce and the salt will be concentrated, it is better to season initially with a lighter hand.
3. Chop the tomatoes with a potato masher until they are in fine chunks and all their liquid is released. Be sure they are chopped and crushed fine, for a semi-chunky sauce. Simmer for 25 minutes over medium heat.
4. While the sauce simmers, heat the water for the pasta. Cook the spaghetti in salted water about half of the way cooked. Drain, reserving some of the water.
5. Taste the sauce and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Add the pasta to the sauce and cook over medium-high heat until all the liquid is absorbed, and the pasta is al dente. If the sauce is over-reduced, use the pasta cooking liquid to adjust it.
6. At the last moment, remove the pan from the heat; add the extra-virgin olive oil, butter, basil, and cheese. Mix thoroughly until the pasta is an orange color. Taste again and adjust the salt if necessary. Remove to a platter. Serve.

NOTES

- **Gluten-free:** Choose a gluten-free pasta option, such as gluten-free spaghetti or any other gluten-free pasta shape you prefer. Many grocery stores offer a variety of gluten-free pasta made from ingredients like rice, corn, quinoa, or chickpeas. Cook the gluten-free pasta according to the package instructions.
- **Dairy-free:**
 - **Butter Substitute:** Replace the butter with a dairy-free butter alternative. Many brands offer dairy-free butter made from ingredients like vegetable oils or plant-based blends. Look for a dairy-free butter that suits your taste and dietary preferences.

- Parmigiano-Reggiano Cheese Substitute: Substitute the Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese with a dairy-free alternative. You can use dairy-free Parmesan-style cheese or make your own dairy-free Parmesan alternative using nutritional yeast, ground nuts (such as cashews or almonds), and salt. Combine these ingredients to create a flavorful cheese substitute that mimics the taste and texture of Parmesan cheese.

SUBSTITUTIONS

- PLUM TOMATOES: You can always use canned tomatoes for a cheaper alternative. Other alternatives are cherry tomatoes and Roma tomatoes.
- RED PEPPER FLAKES: Add a little spice with cayenne pepper.
- DRY SPAGHETTI: Whole wheat spaghetti, spaghetti squash, or whatever shaped pasta you have in your pantry!
- BASIL: If you don't have basil (sad), use oregano, thyme, or rosemary to add balance to the tomatoes.
- PARMESAN REGGIANO: Alternative cheeses that would be great are Pecorino Romano, Grana Padano, and Asiago.

Cashew Chicken Lettuce Wraps

Recipe by: [Mel's Kitchen Cafe](#)

Cost Breakdown: \$22.34 total, \$2.23/serving

Servings: 10

Prep Time: 15 Minutes

Cook Time: 15 Minutes

Total Time: 30 Minutes

TOOLS

- [Large non-stick skillet](#)
- [Cutting board](#)
- Chef's knife

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 cup finely diced yellow or white onion
- 2 cup finely diced, or shredded carrots
- 6-8 cloves garlic, finely minced or pressed through a garlic press

- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 2 pounds boneless skinless chicken breasts or chicken thighs
- 6 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce
- 4 tablespoon pure maple syrup
- 1 cup chopped raw cashews, lightly toasted, if desired
- Bibb or green leaf lettuce leaves for wrapping
- Chopped cucumbers and tomatoes for serving

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a large 12-inch nonstick skillet, heat the oil over medium heat and add the onion and carrots. Add the garlic, salt and pepper and cook for 2-3 minutes, until the vegetables start to soften.
2. Season the chicken pieces lightly with salt and pepper and add to the skillet with the onions and carrots. Cook, stirring often, until the chicken pieces are cooked through, 4-5 minutes.
3. Stir in the soy sauce and maple syrup and cook over medium heat for 2-3 minutes, letting the soy sauce and maple syrup bubble and simmer.
4. Stir in the cashews, cooking until they are just heated through. Season to taste with additional salt and pepper, if needed.
5. Serve in lettuce leaves topped with tomatoes and cucumbers (the freshness adds a delicious element to the flavors!).

NOTES

- Cucumbers + Tomatoes: trust me that the cucumbers (and tomatoes, too, but mostly the cucumbers) make this dish really shine.
- Salt: also, really important, if you aren't using low-sodium soy sauce, you'll probably want to omit the salt from the recipe (and even then, I'm not sure how salty it will be since I've only ever used low-sodium here).
- Gluten-free: Instead of using traditional soy sauce, which contains gluten, use tamari or gluten-free soy sauce. Tamari is a Japanese soy sauce that is typically gluten-free, as it's made without wheat. Be sure to check the label to ensure it's certified gluten-free if you have a severe gluten intolerance or allergy.
- Vegetarian:
 - Instead of using chicken, you can use a plant-based protein alternative such as:

- Firm tofu: Cut the tofu into small cubes and stir-fry them until golden brown before adding the sauce.
- Tempeh: Crumble or dice tempeh and stir-fry it until golden brown before adding the sauce.
- Textured vegetable protein (TVP) or soy crumbles: Rehydrate the TVP or soy crumbles according to package instructions, then stir-fry them until heated through and slightly crispy before adding the sauce.
- Seitan: Cut seitan into small pieces and stir-fry until golden brown before adding the sauce.
- Vegetarian Sauce: Use a vegetarian-friendly sauce instead of soy sauce. You can use tamari (gluten-free soy sauce), coconut aminos, or a vegetarian stir-fry sauce as a substitute.

SUBSTITUTIONS

- VEGETABLES: Use whatever vegetables you have on hand or that are in season. Bell peppers, carrots, snow peas, snap peas, water chestnuts, zucchini, cabbage, mushrooms, broccoli, etc.
- CHICKEN: Instead of chicken breast or thighs, you can use ground chicken or ground pork. Shrimp would also be good in this recipe!
- SOY SAUCE: Coconut aminos, tamari, and teriyaki sauce would all be great alternatives.
- MAPLE SYRUP: Use a little honey in place of the maple syrup.
- CASHEWS: Peanuts or almonds would be great to get that crunch that you're looking for in this recipe!

BBQ Pulled Pork Sandwiches

Recipe by: [Natasha's Kitchen](#)

Cost Breakdown: \$26.46 total, \$3.30/serving

Servings: 8

Prep Time: 15 Minutes

Cook Time: 8 Hours

Total Time: 8 Hours 15 Minutes

TOOLS

- [Slow cooker](#)
- [Cutting board](#)
- Chef's knife

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large onion
- 6 lbs boneless Pork Shoulder Chuck Roast, (or 2 smaller roasts totalling 6-7 lbs)

- 1 Tbsp salt
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1 cup chicken broth
- 1 cup your favorite BBQ Sauce
- 1 Tbsp liquid smoke, optional but nice
- 2 Tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 3 large garlic cloves, pressed
- 2 Tbsp brown sugar

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Chop 1 large onion and place it into the bottom of the slow cooker.
2. Combine 1 Tbsp salt, 1 tsp pepper, and 1 tsp paprika and generously sprinkle the pork roast. Massage the roast to rub the seasoning into the meat. Place meat over the onions.
3. For the marinade, combine 1 cup chicken broth, 1 cup BBQ sauce, 1 Tbsp liquid smoke, 2 Tbsp Worcestershire sauce, 2 Tbsp brown sugar, and 3 pressed garlic cloves. Stir to combine. Pour the marinade over the pork.
4. Cover and set on low for 8 hours. Remove the meat to a large bowl and remove any fat. Shred with forks. Pour any drippings from the crockpot over the meat to taste then brush the meat with warm barbecue sauce to serve.

NOTES

- The recipe can be stored in the refrigerator for 3-4 days. To freeze, portion out leftovers as desired. When reheating from frozen, it's best to thaw in the refrigerator overnight before reheating using one of the methods mentioned earlier. Properly frozen, it should maintain its quality for 2-3 months.
- Gluten-free: Many commercial BBQ sauces and Worcestershire sauces contain gluten-containing ingredients like wheat-based thickeners or malt vinegar. Look for gluten-free versions of these sauces, which are widely available in most grocery stores. Alternatively, you can make your own gluten-free BBQ sauce and Worcestershire sauce at home.
- Dairy-free: Some Worcestershire sauces contain trace amounts of dairy, so it's crucial to check the label. Look for a Worcestershire sauce that is specifically labeled as dairy-free or make your own dairy-free Worcestershire sauce at home using a recipe that doesn't include dairy ingredients.
- Vegetarian: You can adapt the recipe to be vegetarian using jackfruit as a substitute for the pork shoulder chuck roast.

SUBSTITUTIONS

- PORK SHOULDER: Pork loin, pork tenderloin, or beef chuck roast would all be good alternatives.

- **CHICKEN BROTH:** If you don't have chicken broth, use vegetable broth, beef broth, or water + soy sauce or miso paste for depth of flavor.
- **LIQUID SMOKE:** Personally, I would skip the liquid smoke and use smoked paprika or chipotle powder to get the smoky flavor.
- **WORCESTERSHIRE SAUCE:** Coconut aminos, soy sauce, or balsamic vinegar would all be great alternatives.
- **BROWN SUGAR:** Use molasses to achieve that rich flavor.

Thank you for downloading my meal plan! If you have any questions, concerns, or feedback please reach out to me on Instagram at [@feedingyourselfathome](#).

I'd also love to see pictures! Share your reviews on Instagram to receive a promo code for future meal plans!