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Fall is the season of letting go, just like the leaves on the trees.

Ayurveda works in 3 seasons:

Fall/winter = November - February

Spring = March - June

Summer = July - October

The Winter Anti-dote Diet

In winter the cold and wind dry out the land. Our bodies become dried out too, a sensation we can feel in our throats and sinuses. To counter the drying effects of winter we call on nature's high protein, high fat antidote in the form of warm, heavy, oily foods that will replenish our depleted reserves of moisture. This means heavier foods like bananas, avocados, beets, winter squash, nuts, and oils.

We also seek foods that taste sweet, sour, and salty. Why these tastes? In each case, nature is providing something the body needs to pacify the change of season. We've all seen how rock salt melts the ice? Salt heats up the body, so in the winter we increase our intake of salt and salty foods. Because it heats the body, salt acts as a carrier to bring minerals and nutrients deep into the body's tissues. Most spices work well in the winter as they too have a heating quality that combats the cold. Sweet foods such as yams and sweet potatoes also open up and nourish the tissues, which helps to counteract the dryness and lightness in winter. These foods also tend to calm and pacify the body, especially when the winter winds rattle your bones. Foods that are sour in taste tend to heat the body and stimulate digestion (ever wonder why you get the pickle with your sandwich?). In the East people traditionally eat pickled ginger and lemon prior to a meal to stimulate digestive fire. Sour foods such as oranges and grapefruits also contain plenty of water to counter winter's dryness—and Florida happens to produce its most luscious citrus fruits just when we need them most.

The fall fruits, apples and pears, are actually cooling fruits, and you want to eat these fruits at the end of the summer to help our body rid itself of the summer heat that may have accumulated. If we go into winter without first cooling off from the summer the combination of accumulated summer heat, and dryness of winter, can be devastating to our health. Our bodies will react to the dryness by making our immune systems work to produce extra mucus, which can leave us with too much mucus in our system (especially come spring)—in this extra mucus is where germs breed and leave us open to “catching a cold”. Also these end-of-summer fruits are loaded with fiber helping us to clean out our intestinal tract.

However once we enter November it is important to cook apples and pears before eating them, eaten raw they will actually aggravate vata! Thus apple crisp, apple pies, apple dumplings, baked pears are great fall/winter foods.



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So as we move into winter slowly begin to eat more proteins and fats, hearty soups, and nuts.

- ॐ Favor foods that are warm, heavy, and oily. Minimize foods that are cold, dry, and light.
- ॐ Favor foods that are sweet, sour, and salty. Minimize foods that are spicy, bitter, and astringent as these foods are light and cold and will increase these qualities in us.
- ॐ Eat slightly larger quantity of food, but not more than you can digest easily. More food provides more heat for the body when the weather is cold.

Some specific winter recommendations:

Grains – rice, brown rice, and wheat are best grains for winter months (they are warming and sweet)

Fruits – oranges, bananas, avocados, grapes, grapefruit, pineapples, mangos, papayas

Vegetables – beets, carrots, winter squash, acorn squash, tomatoes, okra, onions, artichoke hearts, and sweet potatoes. All vegetables should be cooked in the winter months, raw foods increase vata.

Spices – cardamom, cumin, ginger, cinnamon, fennel, salt, cloves, mustard seed, and small quantities of black pepper.

A word on Beans – beans need to be reduced in the winter—except for mung dal and lentils. Winter is a time of high winds, so we don't want to eat foods that create more wind. Beans also have a tendency to absorb large amounts of water and the last thing we need in the winter is a food that dehydrates us! If you do need to eat beans in the winter (especially those of us who are vegetarians) make sure to soak them extra long or cook them with extra water. This soaking will reduce their drying, wind-producing qualities. They can also be spiced with anti-gas agents such as hing, fennel, ginger, and cardamom.

Above information is excerpts from the book 'The 3 Season Diet' by John Douillard

Other tips for vata types:

If you are a vata type this time of year you need to pay extra attention to staying in balance. Vata types need routine! Set up a morning routine, a weekly practice routine, or any other routine you feel would be good for your life. Put a little more effort into following your routine. It is helpful to write it down or mark it on your calendar to give you reminders and make it easier to establish.

Also, make sure you keep yourself well grounded. One of the ways I keep myself grounded is to make sure my home is organized, comfortable, clean, and free of clutter. Take a day out of each week just to stay home pattering around your house feeling grounded. For me another grounding technique is to dig in the dirt, so planting bulbs for next spring and cleaning out your gardens and closing them up for the winter are other ways to ground yourself.



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Vata types tend to have dry skin, keep your skin from drying out! After you shower massage organic sesame oil into your skin from your feet up to your face! If you feel the need you can wash it off, however I leave it soak into my skin.

Make sure you use your nasya oil (nose oil) or put a little sesame oil in your nostrils, also you can put a little drop in your ears, and after you brush your teeth take a swig of sesame oil and swish it around in your mouth for about 10 minutes. This is known as "oil pulling". Pretty much oil in any orifice you are comfortable putting it in (and even some you are not so comfortable putting it in) is ayurvedically recommended this time of year!

Preparing for Winter -- Eat more Butter and Coconut Oil :)

Winter foods need a little more fat in them to nourish our tissues and keep moisture in our body during the months of cold dry outside air and warm dry inside air. The best sources of fat might be new news to you . . .

Butter, Ghee, and virgin coconut oil are medium chain fatty acids (MCFAs), compared to long chain fatty acids like corn, soy, safflower, canola, and margarine. Longer chain fatty acids are hard to digest and to break down the fat into energy -- so our body prefers to just store them as fat instead.

Medium chain fatty acids like butter, ghee, and coconut oil digest easy and INCREASE our METABOLISM.

Coconut oil and some saturated fats are not the villains we have accused them of. Latest research is showing it is the saturated long chain fatty acids that contain the health risks associated with "bad fat". Not all saturated fats are bad! Medium and short chain fatty acid saturated fats are proving to provide many health benefits

Coconut oil has another boost -- it contains Lauric Acid which is a rare and natural antimicrobial fatty acid. Studies are showing these benefits from consuming lauric acid:

- ☪ Protection from viruses
- ☪ LOWERS cholesterol
- ☪ kills viruses
- ☪ boost immunity
- ☪ increases absorption for vitamins A,D,E,K
- ☪ Provides easily available energy for the body
- ☪ prevents Alzheimer's
- ☪ supports natural weight loss



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ayurvedic tip

From Ayurvedic expert John Joseph Immel, Founder of Joyful Belly

Autumn is a season of deficiency and change, provoking higher stress levels. As leaves fall, nourishing seasonal foods like pumpkin and nutmeg to soothe the nervous system help us weather the change. Cooked pumpkins are soft and comforting. Both sedatives, pumpkin and nutmeg together reduce stress. According to Ayurveda, keeping the nervous system stable through fall is our number one tool for maintaining strong immunity and staying healthy.

In fall when the temperature starts to drop, the body scrambles to protect itself from heat loss. Nourishing foods seem all the more enticing while helping refortify deficient tissue, thicken the skin, and insulate from the cold. Pumpkins, ghee, almonds and sugar all build ojas in time for the coming winter. Ojas is Ayurveda's word for a nourishment.

In addition to nourishing tissue, pumpkin chai is also a rasayana (meaning tonic). Pumpkins are orange because of beta-carotene, a precursor to Vitamin A. Beta-carotene, also in carrots, encourages healing through rejuvenation and regeneration of tissue. Orange foods with beta-carotene are generally liver tonics that clear any residue of high pitta from the summer. They also purify the blood and soothe the eyes. The cooling demulcent and laxative properties of pumpkin soothe the GI tract.

Spices make these heavy ingredients lighter for digestion and pumpkins a bit less gassy. While all spices stimulate circulation, cloves specifically move heat to the surface of the body, warming up cold extremities.

Here is a recipe for pumpkin latte:

Brew your favorite cup of coffee or tea -- set it aside for a moment.

Mix 1 TBSP pumpkin puree to a half cup of milk. I use whole raw local milk :)

Add about 1 tsp brown sugar and vanilla extract

Sprinkle in Cinnamon, Ginger, Nutmeg, and ground Cloves

Whisk the pumpkin, milk, and spices together while heating it.

Pour it into a tall mug, pour in your coffee or tea, cream or more sugar if desired, top with whipped cream and ground nutmeg :)

Below is a more complete list of Winter foods, and below that my most common winter recipes. Please enjoy and eat in love and light, mindfulness and thankfulness.

May you be well nourished . . .



THE 3-SEASON DIET GROCERY LIST – WINTER

(November-February) Though these are not the only items you can eat, they are the most beneficial foods for this season.

**An asterisk means it is best to eat more of this food.*

☸ Eat **more** foods that are **Sweet, Sour, Salty / Heavy, Oily, Moist, Hot:**
such as soups, stews, steamed veggies, warm herbal teas.

☸ Eat **less** foods that are Pungent (Spicy), Bitter, Astringent / Light, Cold, Dry:
such as salads, smoothies, cold foods and beverages, chips and salsa

VEGETABLES	FRUIT	SPICES	LEGUMES	BEVERAGES
Artichokes, hearts *Avocadoes *Beets *Brussels Sprouts *Carrots *Chilies Corn Fennel Eggplant, cooked *Garlic Ginger Hot Peppers Leeks Okra Onions Parsley Potatoes, mashed *Pumpkins Seaweed, cooked Squash, Acorn *Squash, Winter *Sweet Potatoes *Tomatoes Turnips	Apples, cooked Apricots *Bananas Blueberries Cantaloupe, w/lemon Cherries Coconuts, ripe Cranberries, cooked *Dates *Figs *Grapefruit *Grapes Guava *Lemons *Limes *Mangoes Nectarines *Oranges *Papayas Peaches Pears, ripe *Persimmons Pineapples Plums Strawberries *Tangerines	*Anise *Asafetida *Basil Bay Leaf *Black Pepper Caraway *Cardamom Cayenne Chamomile *Cinnamon Clove Coriander *Cumin Dill *Fennel Fenugreek Garlic *Ginger Horseradish Marjoram Mustard Nutmeg Oregano Peppermint Poppy Seeds Rosemary *Saffron Sage Spearmint Thyme *Turmeric	Mung – split, yellow NUTS & SEEDS *Almonds *Brazil Nuts *Cashews Coconuts *Filberts *Flax Lotus Seed *Macadamias *Peanuts, raw *Pecans *Pinons *Pistachios Sunflower *Walnuts MEAT & FISH *Beef *Chicken *Crabs *Duck *Eggs *Freshwater fish *Lamb *Lobster *Ocean Fish *Oysters *Pork	Alcohol (moderation) Black Tea (moderation) Coffee (moderation) Water (warm or hot) HERB TEAS *Cardamom *Chamomile *Cinnamon *Cloves *Ginger *Orange Peel SWEETENERS Honey - Raw *Maple Syrup *Molasses Raw Sugar *Rice Syrup Mint GRAINS *Amaranth Buckwheat (moderation) Millet (moderation) *Oats *Quinoa Rice *Rice, Brown Rye (moderation) *Wheat
OILS *Almond - skin or salad dressing only *Avocado oil - good for on your skin Butter *Coconut *Sesame *Flax *Mustard *Olive - low heat sautéing only or salad dressings	DAIRY *Butter *Buttermilk *Cheese *Cottage cheese *Cream *Ghee *Kefir	CONDIMENTS Carob Chocolate		



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Milk, not cold

Mayonnaise
Pickles

*Shrimp
*Turkey

***Learn more about the
seasonal diet in
"The 3-Season Diet"
by Dr. John Douillard***



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WINTER BREAKFASTS

Oatmeal

- ¾ cup whole oats
- ¾ cup almond milk
- ¾ water

Toasted almonds or pecans

Sucanat

Cinnamon

Banana or baked apple

Cook oats in water and almond milk until desired consistency. While oats are simmering toast almonds, by placing on an iron skillet and roasting over medium heat stirring often. When oatmeal is done stir in sucanat and cinnamon top with banana/baked apple and almonds/pecans.

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Yogurt (Plain, organic)

Papaya and/or mango and/or banana and/or orange or baked apple (baked with cinnamon)

Pecans, and/or walnuts, and/or almonds

Drizzle with pure maple syrup

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Apple Crisp

2 apples cored and sliced (I like to use 1 granny smith and 1 fuji)

1-2 tablespoons Coconut oil (or butter)

1 tablespoon sucanat

1 tsp cinnamon

Flax seeds (optional)

Walnuts (optional)

Handful of oats

Mix cinnamon and sugar and flax seeds with cut apples. Add walnuts and toss again. Top with oats and pat of butter or coconut oil. Bake 30-40 minutes at 350°.

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My own twist on Pumpkin Pie

2 Eggs beaten

1 cup sucanat (organic unprocessed cane juice evaporated)

2 15 oz cans pumpkin (or 1 roasted butternut squash or roasted pumpkin)

2 tsp cinnamon

1/2 tsp ginger

1/4 tsp nutmeg

1/2 tsp ground cloves

1-1/2 cups milk

Mix together and pour into custard cups. Bake at 450° for 15 minutes then reduce heat 350° and bake for 50 minutes.

This excellent for breakfast topped with toasted pecans or good topped with whipped cream for little 10 year old girls who come from school starving and don't like what their mother has prepared for them ;)

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Eggs ☺ Eggs are ok in moderation in the winter for those who eat them. I cook my eggs in coconut oil and a little butter and churna (vata churna in the winter).

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The perfect recipe for winter pancakes:

Core and slice an apple, sprinkle with cinnamon, bake uncovered for approx. 20-30 minutes at 350°.

You can make your own pancake batter from scratch (or Arrowhead Mills does make a good multi-grain pancake mix)

In your skillet melt coconut oil and/or butter, place slivered almonds in the skillet

Pour your pancake batter over the almonds.



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Sprinkle cinnamon on top of your pancakes while they are cooking.
Top with the baked apple and drizzle with natural maple syrup.

Pancakes for 2 recipe

- 3/4 cup flour (you can mix different flours, for ex. buckwheat, whole wheat, white, etc.)
- 1 3/4 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 TBSP sugar
- 3/4 cup milk
- 1 egg
- 1 1/2 TBSP coconut oil

splash vanilla

sift dry ingredients, make well in center and add wet ingredients. Stir gently. Heat coconut oil and butter in a skillet, sprinkle with sliced almonds, pour 1/4 cup pancake mix over almonds, on top of pancake sprinkle with cinnamon. When edges get dry, flip pancake. Repeat above procedure for each pancake.

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CRANBERRIES are the perfect winter fruit, according to Ayurveda, cranberries are the lymph-movers of the winter. The lymphatic system drains every cell and transports the immune system. Cranberries also help to keep bacteria from adhering to our urinary tract which why they are effective at curing UTIs, they also do the same in our gut, help to move bad bacteria through our body while they boost our digestion and help to cure indigestion and ulcers. And adding to their list of goodness, cranberries are also good for our gums, prostate, and they help ward off the common cold. Here is a nice breakfast recipe using cranberries:

Delicious Cranberry Orange Sauce

- 1 pound fresh organic cranberries
- 1 cup fresh organic orange juice (about 3 oranges)
- 1 tbsp ground orange peel
- 1/2 cup organic cane sugar
- walnuts (optional)

Preparation: In a medium saucepan combine the cranberries, orange juice, orange peel, and sugar. Simmer, stirring occasionally, until the cranberries begin to burst and the sauce thickens, at least 15 minutes. Let cool and serve at room temperature.

Top with walnuts. This is also good with a dollop of cottage cheese.

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Chia Seed Oatmeal

- 1 TBSP Chia seeds
- Almonds, other nuts, and/or raisins, Gojibeerys, or other dried fruit
- Mix together and Soak over night in water

Add an apple or any other fruit you want in the morning.

Cook it a bit with some cinnamon so that the fruit gets soft.
Add some oats and more water or milk.
Sweeten it up with some maple syrup or honey.
thats it ;)

Chia seeds are a good source of omega-3s. Although there is some controversy over the fact that vegetable based omega-3s may be harder for some people to convert and use (vegetable based omega-3s are ALA which converts to DHA and EPA in the body. It seems vegetarians are better at making this conversion than meat eaters :)



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Winter Mid-Day Main Meals:

Mabon Salad

4 tsp white wine vinegar

¾ tsp ground cumin

¼ cup olive oil

Salt and pepper

Wisk together

Add:

Leaf lettuce

Orange slices halved

Red onion slices

1 avocado sliced

Sunflower seeds or pumpkin seeds or pecans

Toss and enjoy.

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Lentil Casserole

1 cup chopped onion

¾ cup dried lentils

¾ cup brown rice

¾ cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese

½ tsp thyme

½ tsp basil

½ tsp oregano

¼ tsp salt

1 clove garlic

1/8 tsp sage

½ cup water

2-1/2 cups vegetable broth

Coat a casserole dish with oil (I use coconut) combine all ingredients, stir well, cover and bake at 350° for 1 to 1-1/2 hours.

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Delicious Dal

2 cups lentils or mung bean

6 cups water

1 inch fresh ginger, grated

Simmer above over low heat until tender, about ½ hour (uncovered)

In skillet heat 4 T ghee

Add 3 chopped garlic cloves

1 onion chopped

Cumin and mustard seeds

Optional: add chilis

Sauté over medium heat until golden

Add onion mixture to dal along with 1 large can chopped tomatoes (or fresh tomatoes cut up)

Salt and pepper to taste

Simmer another 5 minutes serve over rice

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Roasted Root vegetables:



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Cut assortment of vegetables into uniform bite size chunks: potatoes, turnips, rutabagas, fennel, carrots, red beets, sweet potatoes, onions, mushrooms
Combine with olive oil, rosemary, salt and pepper, add broth or wine
Roast in a shallow pan at 375° for up to one hour (depending on size of chunks), turning every 15 minutes. In the last 10 minutes raise the heat to 425° to brown the vegetables.

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Avocado-Tomato Salad

One whole avocado cut into chunks
Grape tomatoes
Artichoke hearts or hearts of palm
Fresh mozzarella cheese
Basil
Olive oil
Balsamic vinegar

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Lentil Soup

3 cups green lentils (soaked 2-3 hours)
8 cups water
Sea salt
2 TBSP olive oil
1 large onion chopped
3 stalks celery, chopped
4 carrots, chopped
Sliced mushrooms
3 cloves garlic minced
1 can crushed tomatoes with juice
1 can chopped tomatoes with juice
Juice ½ lemon
½ cup sucanat
2 TBSP red wine vinegar
Ground pepper

Place lentils in large pot with water and bring to boil, cover and simmer 20 min. add salt.

Meanwhile heat oil and cook veggies in vata churna until soft.

Add vegetables to lentils and stir to mix. Add tomatoes, lemon juice, sucanat, and vinegar. Season with pepper.

Bring to boil, reduce to simmer, uncovered until lentils are tender.

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Enchiladas

Cook brown rice.

Sauté spices in coconut oil and/or ghee add onion and garlic and sauté until aromatic. Stir in tomatoes and simmer briefly. Stir in rice.

Lay rice mixture on a flour tortilla, top with cheese and fold the tortilla over (if cheese does not melt pop under a broiler for a minute. Top the tortilla with sour cream, black olives, and avocado.

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Potato Leek Soup

Scrub potatoes (do not peel) cube into small pieces, about 5-6 cups. Slice 2 leeks (I use the greens to, nearly ½ way up to the leaves) Sauté in butter. Add potatoes, salt, pepper, cover with water. Bring to a boil and simmer 45 minutes. Mash by hand in the kettle or for smoother soup puree in a blender or processor.

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Spaghetti Squash

- 1 small spaghetti squash
- 2 TBSP butter or ghee
- Fresh grated pecorino
- Salt/pepper to taste

Pre-heat oven to 375 degrees. Slice squash in half, scoop out seeds, place squash in baking dish and bake for 45-60 minutes until the squash is al dente. Use a fork to pull out strands, mix with remaining ingredients.

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Kale Kavish

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 bunch of Kale rinsed and finely minced
- 2 onions chopped
- 4 cloves of garlic
- 2-3 red or green bell peppers, diced
- 4 carrots sliced
- ¼ cup water
- 2 cups shredded organic raw goat cheese

Sauté onions, garlic, peppers, and carrots in olive oil until softened. Add kale and stir over high heat until kale turns bright green. Then add ¼ cup water and cover to steam for another 5-8 minutes, stirring occasionally. Top with cheese.

Serve over rice or pasta or wrap up in a flour tortilla -- which is what I do to travel, excellent travel food.

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Mushroom Bisque

- 2 potatoes peeled and diced
- 1-1/2 cups water
- 1-1/2 TBSP butter or ghee
- 2 cups onion chopped
- 1 stalk celery
- 1-1/2 lbs. mushrooms
- Salt
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ tsp thyme leaves
- 1 TBSP dry sherry
- 2 TSBP braggs liquid amino acids or soy sauce
- Black pepper
- 1 cup milk

Boil the potatoes and water in a small sauce pan until tender, about 10 minutes. Puree potatoes in remaining cooking water.

Heat butter/ghee in large pan over medium heat, sauté onions and celery for 5 minutes. Add mushrooms, salt, garlic, and thyme, cover and simmer, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes. Turn off heat, add sherry, braggs, and pepper. Puree and return to pot, add milk.

Combine potato and mushroom purees and heat until hot. Top with scallions if desired.

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Rice with yellow split peas and garlic

- 1 cup yellow split peas (soaked for 1 hour or boiled for 2 minutes)
- 2 cups brown basmati rice
- 3 TBSP olive oil
- 1 cinnamon stick



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- 1 bay leaf
- 3 cloves
- 3 garlic cloves
- 1 onion sliced
- Sea salt

Rinse the split peas and soak or boil. Drain. Rinse and soak rice for 30 minutes. Drain. Heat oil in large pan. Put in cinnamon stick, bay leaf, and cloves. Stir once. Put in garlic and onion. Saute until light brown. Add drained rice, split peas, and salt. Stir a couple of minutes until rice turns translucent. Add 4 cups water. Bring to boil. Cover and reduce heat to a simmer, cook for 40 minutes or until soft. Remove bay leaf, cinnamon stick, and cloves. Top with cilantro if desired.

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Vegetable Soup

Melt ghee, stir in vata churna, in this sauté onions, celery, garlic. Add carrots, turnips, beets, peeled cubed sweet potatoes and/or potatoes. Add 4 cups water and bring to boil. Reduce to simmer, add cabbage and/or kale and cilantro. Cook until vegetables are tender.

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Butternut Squash Soup

- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2T ghee or butter
- 2c Vegetable Broth (I like the Imagine No-Chicken Broth) OR used saved potato water
- 1 Butternut Squash cut in half, scoop seeds out and roast at 400° for approx. 1 hour.
- 2 Pears, peeled, cored, and sliced
- 1t thyme leaves
- ¼ t salt
- ¼ t white pepper
- ¼ t ground coriander
- 1c cream or raw milk or almond milk

Cook onion in ghee until tender. Stir in broth, pears, thyme, salt, pepper, and coriander. Heat to boiling; reduce heat, cover and simmer, approx. 10 minutes. Stir in roasted squash. Remove from heat, blend with a submersion blender (or in a normal blender). Return to heat stir in cream or milk. Can top with toasted pecans if desired.

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Lentil Salad

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 large onion, diced | 3 bay leaves |
| EV Olive oil | ¼ cup sherry vinegar |
| 2 carrots, cut into small cubes | 2 cloves garlic, minced |
| 1 ½ cups dried lentils | 3 TBSP walnut oil |
| ½ tsp thyme | Salt and Pepper |

Sauté the diced onion in EVOO until golden. Add carrots and cook for a few minutes more. Add the lentils, thyme, bay leaves, and enough water to cover, bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer 15–20 minutes or until lentils are just tender. Remove from heat and strain in colander. Transfer lentils to a bowl and toss while still hot with vinegar. Stir in the garlic and walnut oil along with salt and pepper. Serve at room temperature or warmed.

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Broccoli Cheese Soup

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon butter, melted
- 1/2 medium onion, chopped
- 1/4 cup melted butter



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- 1/4 cup flour
- 2 cups half-and-half
- 2 cups no-chicken broth by Imagine
- 1/2 pound fresh broccoli
- 1 cup carrots, julienned
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- 8 ounces grated sharp cheddar

Directions:

Saute onion in butter. Set aside. Cook melted butter and flour using a whisk over medium heat for 3-5 minutes. Stir constantly and slowly add the half-and-half (this is called making a roux). Add the broth or stock whisking all the time. Simmer for a few minutes.

Add the broccoli, carrots and onions. Cook over low heat until the veggies are tender for 20-25 minutes. Add salt and pepper. The soup should be thickened by now. Pour in batches into blender and puree or blend with a hand blender.

Return to pot over low heat and add the grated cheese; stir until well blended. Stir in the nutmeg and serve.

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Home made Mac n Cheese

- 3 tbsp. butter
- 1/4 c. flour
- 2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. dry mustard
- 1/2 tsp. pepper
- 2 1/2 c. milk
- 1/2 lemon
- 2 c. Cheddar/Monterey Jack cheese, grated
- 1/2 cup vintage aged cheddar cheese
- 1 (16 oz.) box elbow macaroni

In large saucepan, melt butter over low heat. Stir in flour, salt, mustard and pepper until smooth; take off heat. Little by little, stir in milk until smooth. Stir constantly for 10 minutes on heat until thick; take off heat. Add 1/2 squeezed fresh lemon juice. Stir in 2 cups Cheddar/Monterey Jack cheese until melted. Put cooked macaroni in a greased casserole dish, pour cheese mixture over and mix well. Sprinkle vintage aged Cheddar cheese on top. Bake at 375 degrees for 20 minutes.

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Mustard Kohlrabi

- 4 to 6 medium kohlrabi with leaves
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 tablespoon prepared mustard and/or dijon mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

Trim off root ends and vinelike stems from kohlrabi. Wash and pare. Cut into 1/4 inch slices. Pull the leaves off the stems, roll them up together and slice them thinly. Heat 1 inch salted water (1/2 teaspoon salt to 1 cup water) to boiling. Add kohlrabi. Cover and heat to boiling; reduce heat. Boil until tender, about 20 minutes, half way through boiling time add the leaves (the leaves are my favorite part, many people discard them!). Drain. Stir in butter, mustard, and salt. Cook briefly, turning slices, until golden brown.

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Whipped parsnips with Leek Gravy



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Whipped Parsnips

- 1 pound parsnips, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 1 1/2 cups (about) whole milk
- 1/3 cup whipping cream

preparation

Combine parsnips, 3/4 cup milk and whipping cream in heavy large saucepan. Cover and simmer over medium-low heat until parsnips are tender and most of liquid has evaporated, about 30 minutes. Mash with your choice of tools . . . Season parsnips to taste with salt and pepper and serve.

Leek Gravy

- 4 tablespoons butter
- 1 leek, diced or dried leeks soaked in water
- 2 garlic cloves, diced
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 1 cup vegetable stock or LESS if using the dried leeks soaked in water

Salt and Pepper- to taste

Parsley- chopped (garnish)

In a frying pan over medium-high heat, add 2 tablespoons of the butter and sauté the leeks and garlic (season with salt and pepper) uncovered for 3-4 minutes or until soft. Push the vegetables to the outside rim of the pan. Add the remaining butter in the middle of the pan and whisk in the flour to make a rue. Add the stock (and leek water if using dried leeks); bring up to a boil, then reduce heat to low while continually stirring until desired consistency.

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COLLARDS with Mashed Potatoes

Make mashed potatoes to your liking - i like mashed potatoes with the skin

- large onion
- 2-3 cloves garlic
- Collard Greens
- Salt and pepper

Saute onion and garlic in butter. Add salt and pepper. Remove the rib from the collard leaves --fold leaf and slice your knife along the rib, roll the leaf and slice finely. Add to onion and garlic. Cook over high heat about 10 minutes add 1/2 cup potato water (or plain water if you did not save your potato water ;) Steam another 10 minutes.

Serve over mashed potatoes

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Subji and Jeera Rice

Subji (wet in a "gravy") (Subji means vegetables)
INGREDIENTS:

- Cauliflower - 1 big or medium size separated into florets
- Peas - 1 cup
- Onion - 1 to 2 medium size
- Tomato - 2 medium size
- Ginger - 1 inch piece



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- Garlic - 3-4 cloves
- Turmeric powder - 1/2 tsp
- Chilly powder - 2 tsp
- Cumin powder - 1 tsp
- Coriander powder - 2 tsp
- Garam masala - 1/2 tsp
- Cumin seeds - 1 tsp
- Oil and salt - as required

METHOD:

- Wash the cauliflower florets in warm water with a pinch of salt.
- Grind or put in a food processor: onion, tomato, garlic, ginger to a coarse paste, this is your masala.
- Heat pan with some oil or ghee, add cumin seeds and when it becomes brown, add the spices and saute until aromatic,
- Then add the cauliflower florets and peas and mix well. Add some water, say for about 3/4 to 1 cup of water, depending upon the consistency. if you have saved potato water or water from steaming vegetables, use this instead of plain water. Let it steam for a bit.
- Add the ground masala carefully.
- Close the pan with a lid and let it get cooked with the masala. Keep stirring in between.
- When the florets and peas have become tender and cooked well, transfer the contents to a bowl and serve hot with rotis or parathas.

Jeera Rice

melt ghee add lots of cumin seeds and toast. stir in cooked rice with lots of chopped cilantro

OR

melt ghee and toast lots of cumin seeds. stir in rice until coated well. add water and cook. when done add cilantro.

+++++

Cathrin's Pumpkin Curry

- Ghee
- chopped ginger
- sliced green or red onions
- mustard seeds
- tumeric
- Saute all the above together

Add:

- 1-2 teaspoon Curry Paste
- 1-2ll teaspoon miso
- raisins or dried cranberries
- saute briefly

Add:

- Peeled cubed fresh pumpkin
- let it simmer to desired roasted-ness

Add:

- 1 can coconut milk
- simmer briefly



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Top with:
Cilantro and a little salt

++++
My new Fav Recipe for end of 2012 into 2013 . . . the year of happiness and prosperity . . .

SPAGHETTI SQUASH PAD THAI

Ingredients:

- 1 batch Sunshine Sauce (recipe follows)
- 2 large eggs
- 2 teaspoons soy sauce or braggs aminos
- coconut oil
- 1/2 medium onion, thinly sliced (about 1/2 cup)
- 1 cup snap peas, thinly sliced lengthwise or peas or other green vegetable
- 2 cups roasted spaghetti squash – To roast spaghetti squash, slit with knife (to prevent it from exploding!) place on a cooking sheet and roast at 350° for about an hour or until soft)

Directions:

Crack the eggs into a small bowl, and use a fork to scrambled them with the soy sauce. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat, about 3 minutes. Add 2 T coconut oil to the skillet, and when it's melted, pour in the eggs and let them spread like a pancake. Reduce the heat to medium and cover with a lid, letting the eggs cook until they're set and beginning to brown on the bottom, about 3-4 minutes. Flip and lightly brown on the other side. Remove the eggs from the pan and cut into strips with a sharp knife.

Using the same pan, increase heat to medium-high and add 1 T coconut oil to the pan. Saute the onion and snap peas, stirring with a wooden spoon, until they're crisp-tender, about 2 minutes.

Add the spaghetti squash and cooked egg to the pan, stirring with a wooden spoon, cook until heated through, about 3 minutes.

Add the Sunshine Sauce to the pan and stir-fry until everything is well-blended and hot.

Divide among two plates, sprinkle with (optional) garnishes (chopped toasted cashews or almonds, sunflower seeds, sliced scallions, minced cilantro, a squeeze of lime juice), and dig in.

Serves 2

Sunshine Sauce

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 1 clove garlic, minced (about 1 teaspoon)
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce or braggs aminos
- 1/4 teaspoon powdered ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon rice vinegar or sweet flavored vinegar
- 1/4 cup butter
- dash of cayenne pepper (optional)
- 1/4 cup coconut milk

Directions:

Place all ingredients except the coconut milk in the bowl of a food processor and whirl until well blended. Scrape down sides of the bowl with a rudder scrapper, then add the coconut milk. Process until it's blended and smooth.



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Baked Brie over Mache

- 12 ounces good French Brie, cut into 4 wedges
- 6 tablespoons honey
- 3 tablespoons pistachios or pecans or walnuts
- 4 ounces mache leaves (8 to 10 ounces with roots attached) or other greens
- 1 tablespoon syrupy aged balsamic vinegar
- 3 tablespoons good olive oil
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 large Granny Smith apple, cored and thinly sliced

Arrange the 4 wedges of Brie snugly in one layer in a glass or ceramic baking dish. Scatter the pistachios over the top. Bake for 3 to 5 minutes (depending on the ripeness of the Brie) until the Brie just begins to ooze but isn't melted. Be careful—it happens fast!
Place the mache in a large bowl and toss it gently with the balsamic vinegar and olive oil. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Divide the salad among 4 large salad plates and place a piece of the warm Brie with the pistachios in the center of each plate. Place a quarter of the apple slices on each plate fanned out on one side of the Brie. Drizzle with the honey and serve immediately.

Vegetarian (gluten-free) French Onion Soup

- 2 Large sweet onions cut in half and thinly sliced
- Hunk of butter
- 2-3 cups vegetable stock (I save the water from cooking potatoes and other vegetables and can it. I like to use potato water and beet water in this soup)
- 1 Tablespoon flour or chick pea flour or cornstarch for gluten-free
- 1 teaspoon balsamic vinegar
- 1-2 cloves garlic minced
- Gruyere Cheese, shaved thin or grated
- Salt (maybe)

Cook the onions in the butter until they start to brown (cook in a dutch oven or pot big enough for the entire soup). Add garlic, stock, flour, and vinegar.
Cover and simmer for 15-20 minutes until the stock has thickened and the onions are soft and tender
Sprinkle in some pepper.
Fill custard cups or oven safe soup bowls 3/4 inch from top with soup.
Top with cheese.
Place under broiler until the cheese is melty and browned.

++++++
PANEER RECIPE :)))

(Makes 12 ounces of paneer - homemade Indian curd cheese)

- Ingredients
- Cheesecloth
- 8 cups whole milk
- 1/4 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice, plus more as needed



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Method

Line a large colander with a large double layer of cheesecloth, and set it in your sink. Make sure the cheesecloth extends beyond the edges of the colander.

In a large wide pot, bring the milk to a gentle boil over medium heat, stirring frequently to avoid burning the bottom. This takes a little while so be patient.

Add the lemon juice and turn the heat down to low. Stirring gently, you should almost immediately see the curds (white milk solids) and whey (the yellowish liquid) separate.

If the milk doesn't separate, juice some more lemons and add another tablespoon or two. Boost the heat again and the milk should separate. Stir in a singular motion that gathers the curds together rather than breaks them up.

Remove the pot from the heat and carefully pour the contents into the cheesecloth-lined colander. You may want to save the whey for other purposes, such as lacto-fermenting veggies, adding to soup, feeding your pets, baking with, or cooking grains with.

Grab the ends of the cheesecloth and twist the ball of cheese to squeeze out the excess whey. Tie the cheesecloth to your kitchen faucet and allow the cheese to drain for about 5 minutes.

Then place it on a plate with the twisted part of the cheesecloth on the side, this will ensure your block of cheese is nice and smooth. Then set another plate on top, weighing the second plate down with cans of beans or a heavy pot, if needed.

This is a good time (while the paneer is firming up – about 20 minutes) to make your gravy (recipe below).

Once firm, slice paneer into $\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ " slices, and fry in an iron skillet with a mixture of butter and coconut oil over medium heat until it begins to have a golden brown color – 1–2 minutes on each side.

Serve with one of the gravy recipes below.

Collard Greens Gravy

Ingredients:

coconut oil
garlic
onion
collard greens
potato water

saute garlic and onion in coconut oil. fold the collard greens in half and slice off the thick rib. Thinly slice the remaining collard greens. Saute collard greens with onion and garlic a few moments. Stir in 1/2 cup or so of saved potato water. Simmer for 5–10 minutes.

Easy Vegetarian Gravy

Ingredients

2 cups water
1 stick of butter (or ghee)
1/4 cup soy sauce (or coconut aminos, Bragg's, or tamari)



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1/2 cup flour (or chickpea flour or your flour of choice)

Method

In a sauce pan, melt all the butter over medium-low heat. Add the flour and lightly brown it, stirring with a wire whisk.

Add the soy sauce while still whisking. It will thicken considerably and quickly.

Then slowly add the water a little at a time while continuing to whisk until desired thickness is achieved.

Fancier Vegetarian Gravy (Makes 2 1/2 cups)

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup vegetable oil, butter, or ghee
- 1/3 cup chopped onion
- 5 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour (or chickpea flour or your flour of choice)
- 4 tablespoons light soy sauce (or coconut aminos, Bragg's or tamari)
- 2 cups vegetable broth
- 1/2 teaspoon dried sage
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper

Method

Heat oil in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Sauté onion and garlic until soft and translucent, about 5 minutes. Stir in flour, nutritional yeast, and soy sauce to form a smooth paste. Gradually whisk in the broth. Season with sage, salt, and pepper. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, stirring constantly, for 8 to 10 minutes or until thickened.

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Leek and Celery Root Soup

Ingredients

- 3 tbs. unsalted butter
- 2 medium leeks (white and light green parts only), trimmed, halved lengthwise, cut crosswise into thin half-moon slices, rinsed thoroughly, and drained
- 1 medium yellow onion, thinly sliced
- 1 tsp. kosher salt; more to taste
- 1-1/2 lb. celery root (about 1 large)
- 3/4 cup crème fraîche (raw)
- 1/4 cup heavy cream (raw); more as needed
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 cup thinly sliced fresh chive

Directions



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In a 4-quart or larger heavy-based pot, melt the butter over medium-low heat. Add the leeks, onion, and a generous pinch of salt and cook, stirring occasionally, until very soft and lightly golden but not brown, 15 to 20 minutes. Reduce the heat to low if you see signs of browning.

Meanwhile, peel the celery root with a sharp knife (expect to slice quite a bit off the exterior as you trim). Halve the peeled celery root lengthwise and cut each half into 1-inch-thick wedges. Cut each wedge crosswise into 1/4-inch slices. You should have about 5 cups.

Add the celery root, 1 teaspoon salt, and 1/2 cup water to the leeks. Cover and cook until the celery root is tender, 10 to 15 minutes. (Check occasionally; if all the water cooks off and the vegetables start to brown, add another 1/2 cup water.) Add 4-1/2 cups water or saved potato water, etc., bring to a simmer, and continue to cook another 20 minutes. Let cool slightly.

Purée the soup (with a hand blender, or in small batches in a stand blender) to a very smooth, creamy consistency. Let cool completely and then store in the refrigerator at least overnight or for up to two days.

About an hour before serving, put the crème fraîche in a small bowl and stir in enough of the heavy cream so that the mixture reaches the consistency of yogurt. Leave the cream mixture at room temperature until you are ready to serve the soup. (If the cream is too cold, it will cool the soup.)

Reheat the soup. (If it's too thick, gradually thin it with as much as 1 cup water.) Taste and add more salt as needed. Ladle the soup into small espresso cups or bowls. Top each portion with a small spoonful of crème fraîche (it should float on top of the soup). Finish each cup with a pinch of black pepper and a sprinkle of chives.

Makes about 6 cups.



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Winter Light Suppers

Roasted Kale

Roasted Kale with Sea Salt

- 4 cups firmly-packed kale
- 1 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tsp. good-quality sea salt

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Wash and trim the kale: Peel off the tough stems by folding the kale leaves in half like a book and stripping the stems off. Toss with extra virgin olive oil. Roast for five minutes. Turn kale over. Roast another 7 to 10 minutes until kale turns brown and becomes paper thin and brittle. Remove from oven and sprinkle with sea salt. Serve immediately.

Makes 2 servings.

Per serving: 186 calories, 14 g fat (2 g saturated fat), 0 mg cholesterol, 13 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber, 4 g protein, 412% vitamin A, 268% vitamin C, 18% calcium, 13% iron

Kale is one of the healthiest foods around. It's full of vitamins A, C and K, and it is a great source of manganese, calcium and iron. It also has no cholesterol and offers a nice serving of fiber and protein.

The problem is kale is much tougher than other leafy greens, like swiss chard, collard greens and spinach. Hence, it isn't as versatile for cooking. It doesn't work as well in salads or sauces, for example, as spinach or swiss chard.

That's probably also why most recipes for kale are for soups or stir fries. This recipe breaks that mold. The kale comes out of the oven crispy and salty, giving it an almost fried-like texture. The result is a great way to get kids (and grown-ups alike) to eat this super-nutritious vegetable.

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Brussel Sprouts

Fresh brussel sprouts quartered

Olive oil

Mix together and broil, top with a little fresh parmesan/pecorino and broil a little longer

OR

Steam brussel sprouts and toss with butter and lemon.

+++++

Butternut Squash

Roast squash at 350° for approx. 1 hour. Cut in half and scoop out seeds. Mash with a little butter and sprinkle with sucanat, cinnamon, and nutmeg.

+++++

CARROT AND GINGER SOUP

6 tbsp. ghee

Vata churna

1 lg. yellow onion, chopped

1/4 c. finely chopped ginger root

3 cloves garlic, minced

7 c. vegetable stock (in lieu of making your own I found Imagine No-Chicken broth to be my favorite)

1 c. dry white wine

1 1/2 lb. carrots, peeled, cut into 1/2" pieces

2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice

Pinch curry powder

Salt & ground pepper

Snipped fresh chives or parsley

1. Melt ghee in large stock pot over medium heat. Add onion, ginger and garlic; sauté for 15-20 minutes.

2. Add the stock, wine and carrots. Heat to boiling. Reduce heat and simmer uncovered over medium heat until the carrots are very tender, about 45 minutes.

3. Puree the soup with a hand/submersion blender or for smoother soup in a blender or processor. Season with lemon juice, curry powder, salt and pepper to taste. Sprinkle with chives or parsley.



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Winter Vegetable Soup

- ½ cup sweet potatoes
- ½ cup squash
- ½ cup peas
- ¼ cup beets
- ¼ cup beet greens
- Chilies
- Spices to taste: cumin, ginger, tumeric, pepper, fenugreek
- Salt
- 2 cups water

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Creamy Squash Soup

- 1 acorn squash or small butternut
- 3 TBSP ghee or butter
- 1/8 tsp each: cinnamon powder, ginger powder, cardamom, nutmeg, saffron
- 2 cups chopped onion
- 1 carrot diced
- 1 potato diced
- 1 apple peeled, cored, and chopped
- 3 ½ cups water
- 1 cup almond milk (or milk or cream)
- ½ cup apple cider
- Salt and pepper to taste

Clean the squash, cut in half and scoop out seeds. Place it cut side down on a lightly oiled baking pan, cover and bake at 350° about one hour.

Sauté the spices in ghee, add the onion and sauté until translucent. Add carrots, potatoes, apples, and water. Bring to boil, simmer covered about 20 minutes or until vegetables are tender.

When the baked squash has cooled scoop out the soft insides and add to the soup. Add the milk and cider.

Blend with a hand blender to your desired consistency (smooth or chunky) add salt and pepper to taste, more cinnamon if necessary.

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[Borscht](#)

What you need:

- 1 large onion
- Olive oil
- 3 medium beets, peeled and diced
- 14 ounces no-chicken broth by imagine
- Greek or plain whole-milk yogurt (mix the latter with sour cream)

What you do: Chop onion, and sauté in 1 tablespoon olive oil until golden. Add beets, broth, and ½ teaspoon salt. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat, and simmer 20 minutes, or until beets are tender. Puree mixture in a blender until smooth. Whisk ½ cup hot soup into 1 cup yogurt, and stir yogurt mixture into soup, until well-blended. Serves 4.

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RECIPES I AM EXPERIMENTING WITH

Matcha Rice Recipe

Recipe by Reiko Taichi

Recipe URL (in Japanese only): <http://www.recipe-blog.jp/mypage/recipe/detail/686831>

Ingredients

1. White Rice 540cc (18.36 oz, 2 3/4 cup)
2. Water 650cc (22.1 fl oz)
3. Salt to taste
4. Salted rice malt (*shio-koji*) 3 tablespoon
5. Matcha powder 3 teaspoon
6. Olive oil 2 1/2 tablespoon

Recipe Instructions

1. Stir matcha powder, salted rice malt, and olive oil in advance to make a matcha paste. Stir well until smooth.
2. Put rice and water in a pot and add the matcha paste (1).
3. Add a pinch of salt and stir well.
4. Cooking in a pot: Cook over high heat until boiling. Adjust to low heat after boiling and cook for 13 minutes. Then, cook over high heat for **10 seconds** and turn off heat. Wait for 10 minutes.

Cooking in a rice cooker: as usual!

Goes well with soysauce cooked konbu (kelp seaweed). Although matcha rice is a Japanese style dish, it has a bit of non-Japanese (western) taste. Please try making it and experience the new style rice.



AND

Good link to making dash soup stock and miso recipes:<http://www.savoryjapan.com/recipes/soup/soup.html>

How to: Homemade shio kombu or kombu no tsukudani

28 Nov 2007 by maki



Kombu, the leathery seaweed that is used to make [dashi stock](#), is packed full of umami. A traditional way to prepare it is as *shio kombu* (salty kombu) or *kombu no tsukudani*. Tsukudani is a method of cooking something with soy sauce, sake and/or mirin, and sugar until it's very dark, quite salty and sweet too. It's a preserving method, since the salt and sugar greatly increase the keeping qualities of the food.



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Kombu no tsukudani can be tucked into the corner of a bento box to add a little variety. It's also a good onigiri filling. Properly made and stored in the refrigerator, it keeps almost forever.

It does take a while to cook, depending on how tough the kombu is. It's worth making if you think commercial *kombu no tsukudani* is too salty or too sweet, or too expensive.

It can be made from unused dry kombu or kombu that's been used once to make dashi. I've given instructions for both.

Kombu no tsukudani or shiokombu

Since kombu comes in all sizes, I've given weight amounts here. You can halve the amounts if this seems like too much to make at once.

- 100g / 3 1/2 oz dry kombu seaweed, ideally one that is thick and covered with a fine whiteish powder
- 4 Tbs (or more) tamari soy sauce or dark soy sauce
- 2 Tbs. rice vinegar (or white wine vinegar)
- 6 Tbs. sake
- 2 Tbs. mirin
- 2 Tbs. (or more) sugar
- 1 tsp. of grated ginger juice (grate ginger and squeeze out the juice) - optional

Equipment needed: a heavy bottomed saucepan. (A Le Creuset-type enamelled cast iron one is ideal.)

Inspect the kombu - if it has sand or dirt on it (not the natural fine white powdery coating), wash it off. (Nowadays it's rare to find sand etc. on commercially available kombu, but if you buy it from a local producer or even gather it yourself, you'll have to deal with that.)

Soak the kombu in water to cover just until it's soft enough to cut. Drain, making sure the water drips back into whatever you were soaking the kombu in, and cut the kombu into bite-sized pieces.

Put the kombu back in the soaking water and add vinegar. Leave for an hour or more. The kombu should feel a bit slimy at the end of the soaking period. The vinegar helps to tenderize it. Some thicker kinds of kombu may require a longer soak.

Put the kombu and soaking liquid into the heavy pan. Add the other ingredients. Bring up to a simmer then lower the heat - the surface of the liquid should be barely bubbling. Add water if it starts to dry out.



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Simmer slowly like this until the kombu is very soft - it should seem almost too soft, since when it cools the kombu will stiffen up a bit. By this point there should be very little liquid in the pan. Taste the kombu, and add a bit more soy sauce or sugar if needed, and simmer some more. When it's done the kombu will be shiny and caramelized and have a translucent quality, like thin slices of dark caramel or tortoiseshell.

Store, covered, in the refrigerator.

You can optionally add a couple of handfuls of bonito flakes near the end of the cooking process. Mix in well, and let it cook down until it's almost dry. (Adding bonito flakes will make it no longer vegan of course, since bonito is a fish.)

You can also add red pepper flakes or *shichimi* (or *nanami!*) *tohgarashi* for a bit of spice.

Instant soup from kombu no tsukudani

Put a little homemade or commercial kombu no tsukudani into a mug or small bowl, and add hot water. Optionally add a little julienned fresh ginger. Stir and let sit for a few minutes. It makes an interesting clear soup. (Confession: I used to hate this when I was a kid, but now I rather like it. It may take some getting used to.)

HOMEMADE SOUR CREAM RECIPE :)

<http://www.culturesforhealth.com/sour-cream>

Making sour cream at home is easy, you will need only cream and a starter culture. While making sour cream takes only a few minutes of prep time, allow a full 24 hours for the sour cream to culture and cool prior to serving.

Choosing a Cream

The first step to making sour cream is choosing an appropriate cream for the project.

- Whipping cream (whole cream) will yield the thickest sour cream.
- Half-and-half can be used, but the sour cream will have a thinner consistency. Dry milk powder can be added to improve the consistency, if desired.
- Raw cream can be used but will yield a thinner consistency than if pasteurized whipping cream is used.
- Avoid ultra-pasteurized (UP) or ultra-high temperature (UHT) cream, as it yields inconsistent results when used for culturing.

Choosing a Starter Culture

There are a few options for starter cultures:



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- Direct-set sour cream starter culture. The advantage of a direct-set culture is that the powdered starter is kept in the freezer until you are ready to make sour cream.
- Cultured buttermilk or yogurt is convenient to use as starter for culturing cream, as well. Use 1 tablespoon starter per cup of cream.
- Milk kefir grains or finished milk kefir can be used to make Kefir Cream, a good substitute for sour cream.

Making Sour Cream

1. Once you've chosen the cream and starter culture, mix the cream and starter culture together.
2. Cover the container with a coffee filter or cloth, secured with a rubber band.
3. Place the mixture in a warm spot, 70°-80°F, for 12 to 18 hours or until thickened.
4. Once the mixture has set, cover the jar with a lid and place it in the refrigerator for at least 6 hours to halt the culturing process and cool the sour cream.

Add a small amount of dry milk powder for a thicker sour cream. Alternatively, heat the cream to 180°F and hold at that temperature for 30 minutes. Cool completely prior to adding the starter culture.

Ready for Recipes Using Sour Cream?

- Mexican Rice Salad with Sour Cream and Kefir Dressing
- Sour Cream Spice Cake
- Red Potatoes and Green Beans in Sage Sour Cream Sauce

Pickled and Canned Red Beets

Scrub the beets.

Leave the tails and about a half inch of the stems attached. This is to keep all of the color and nutrients from bleeding out while they cook.

Put the beets in a pot and cover them completely with water.

Place the pot on the stove. Cover and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to a simmer and cook until the beets are soft when pierced with a knife, about 45 to 60 minutes.

Drain the beets.

Let them cool until you can handle them.

Peel the beets. First, cut off the tops and tails and then the skins should just slide off. It's fun!

Cut the beets. You can choose any size you like but I prefer a small bite-size chunk. The larger the chunks, the more jars you'll need as





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they won't be as space efficient. Put the chunks into a pot.

Heat your canning jars. I just simply put my clean jars in a 225 degree Fahrenheit oven for about 15 minutes. This sterilizes them and keeps them hot while you fill them one by one.

Sterilize the canning lids. I place them in a small pot, cover them with water, and bring to a boil. Remove from heat and leave them in the water until you are ready to use them. When I'm open kettle canning like this, I try to use the lids while they are still very hot.

Put the pot of beet chunks on the stove and **add 3 cups of apple cider vinegar and 4 cups of granulated sugar.**

Bring the beets and juice to a simmer.

The level of the juice should be about even with the beets. If it doesn't come up high enough, mix up a bit more of the brine solution, maybe another cup of vinegar and 1 1/4 cups of sugar. Add this to the pot and check the level again. Keep the beets at a simmer while you fill the jars.

Fill your jars one by one. Remove a hot jar from the oven and fill it up with beets. Bring the beet and juice level to within 1/4 inch of the top of the jar, but not higher than that. Wipe off the top of the jar.

Using a clean, damp cloth, wipe the top rim of the jar...where the lid meets the jar, not where the ring screws on. You don't want any food particles or dirt to get between the lid and the jar that would interfere with the seal.

Place a hot lid on top of the jar and screw on a ring, nice and tight. Not too tight but it should be snug.

Let the jars cool.

Let them sit on the counter to cool completely (over night is best). Remove the rings from the jars and if the jars seem sticky, wash them in warm, soapy water. Store the jars in a cool, dark, dry place for the longest shelf life. I've known beets to last at least two years. I've never had any around for longer than that so I don't know how long they will actually keep.