

**7 EASY
PLANT-BASED
MEALS**

IN
20 Minutes or Less

Spoonful of Plants



WELCOME!

I'm so glad you're here!

My name is Donna Castellano, MS, RDN and as dietitian, my mission is to help you achieve your health goals without added stress. I love sharing delicious, healthy recipes that help you get more whole foods, fruits and vegetables into your diet!

I get it. Life is busy. The good news is, there's nothing wrong with a little help from pre-cooked or store-bought ingredients to make mealtimes easier.

In this ebook, I'm also sharing some of my favorite nutrition tips + tricks for using basic ingredients to elevate dishes and make them even more nutritious and flavorful.

Bonus

At the end of each recipe I'll give you a flexible meat ingredient option to work with, which is especially helpful for those family members who prefer to include meat with their meal.

Ready to see how easy it can be?

Let's get to it!



ELEVATE MEALS WITH EASE

Keep these tips in mind for turning basic meals into eye-pleasing, nutritious, and flavor-packed dishes:

- Garnish your plate with fresh herbs like parsley, cilantro, chives, and basil for added flavor and visual appeal.
- Add some zest! Lemon or orange zest can liven up grains and add additional nutrients.
- Chopping up nuts and seeds not only adds texture and crunch but healthy fats too!
- Chopped fresh fruit can add a naturally sweet boost to savory or spicy foods.
- A sprinkle of flaky sea salt or a drizzle of good quality olive oil or balsamic glaze can amplify flavor with minimal effort.
- Use fresh chilies, hot sauce, chili paste, or even a sprinkle of cayenne pepper to spice up a dish.
- Just a bit of crumbled cheese, like goat, feta and even Parmesan can enhance flavor without a ton of calories and fat.

Setting a proper table is the finishing touch that transforms a simple meal into a special occasion, where the heart of the dish is matched by the beauty of the moment.

1

VEGGIE MEATBALL SUB



PREP TIME

3 MINS

COOK TIME

10 MINS

SERVES

4

INGREDIENTS

- 12 frozen vegetarian meatballs: I love [Heidi's Real Food brand](#)
- 8 oz favorite jarred tomato sauce
- 4 hero rolls
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- fresh basil

DIRECTIONS

Preheat broiler.

Warm the meatballs in the microwave according to package instructions.

Prepare the rolls by placing them on a baking tray. Divide meatballs amongst the rolls and spoon tomato sauce over top. Sprinkle the meatballs with cheese.

Broil for 5 minutes until rolls become golden and cheese has melted.

Add some fresh basil and serve with simple side salad if desired.

Easy flexible option: As a mom, I know it's hard to please everyone at mealtime. Sub in turkey meatballs for anyone not into the plant-based version.

Nutrition Notes:

When comparing jarred tomato sauces, choose ones with lower sodium content.

MEXICAN SWEET POTATO & KALE SALAD



PREP TIME	COOK TIME	SERVES
5 MINS	20 MINS	4

INGREDIENTS

- 4 cups store-bought pre-cut sweet potatoes
- 6-8 cups pre-washed/chopped kale (any variety)
- 15 oz black beans (rinsed and drained)
- 1/3 cup shredded Mexican cheese
- 1 cup tortilla chip strips (or crushed tortilla strips)
- 1 cup frozen corn (defrosted)
- 1 avocado (sliced)
- 1 cup store-bought salsa verde
- fresh lime
- avocado oil cooking spray
- coarse salt and fresh pepper

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 425 F. Spray a baking sheet generously with cooking spray.

Add the sweet potatoes to the baking sheet, toss with salt and pepper, and roast about 20 min until tender. To speed cooking time, make sure potatoes are no more than one inch thick.

In meantime, make the salad by adding the kale to a large bowl.

While the potatoes are in the oven, toss the kale with the salsa so that the kale begins to soften.

Add the warm roasted sweet potatoes, beans and corn to the kale and toss to combine.

Sprinkle salad with cheese and tortilla strips, avocado and a drizzle of fresh lime juice. Add more salsa if needed.

Easy flexible option: Add in shredded rotisserie chicken or pre-cooked shredded pork.

MEDITERRANEAN HUMMUS SANDWICH



PREP TIME**5 MINS****COOK TIME****NONE****SERVES****1**

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbsp store-bought hummus
 - jarred roasted peppers (need about 4 peppers) sliced
 - 2 slices 100% whole grain bread
 - 1/2 tomato sliced
 - 1/2 cucumber sliced very thin
 - handful baby spinach leaves
 - 1 oz creamy goat cheese crumbles
 - 1 tsp oregano
 - sea salt and pepper
-

DIRECTIONS

Make the sandwich by slathering one slice of the bread with hummus. Layer remaining ingredients on the sandwich and season with oregano, salt and pepper.

Easy flexible option: Add on thick slices of deli turkey, pre-cooked grilled chicken or roast beef.

Nutrition Notes: Ask for lower sodium cold cuts if and when using meat in sandwiches or better yet, look for pre-cooked fresh meats at the deli counter/supermarket and slice them yourself.

SPAGHETTI WITH PESTO WHITE BEANS & OLIVES



PREP TIME

5 MINS

COOK TIME

12 MINS

SERVES

4**INGREDIENTS**

- 1 lb spaghetti
- 8 oz. store-bought pesto (room temp)
- 1/2 cup sliced, pitted green olives
- 1.5 cups cannellini beans, drained
- fresh basil
- Parmesan cheese
- Kosher salt

DIRECTIONS

In a large pot of salted water, boil pasta and cook al denté. Before draining, reserve 1/2 cup pasta water.

Drain pasta and add it back to the pot. Pour on the pesto, add in the beans and olives and toss to combine. If pasta seems too dry, add in a bit of the reserved pasta water.

Serve with fresh basil and Parmesan cheese.

Easy Flexible Option: Add in shredded rotisserie chicken.

Nutrition Notes: Using cooked pasta water rather than using olive oil for thinning out pasta sauces, can save you a ton of unwanted calories. Pasta water contains the starch and salt from cooking and adds a bit of thickness and flavor to the pasta.

5

CORN & BLACK BEAN RICE BOWL



PREP TIME

5 MINS

COOK TIME

15 MINS

SERVES

4

INGREDIENTS

- 4 cups cooked rice of choice
- 15 oz black beans, rinsed and drained
- 2 cups frozen and defrosted corn
- 2 cups chopped romaine lettuce
- 1/2 red onion, diced
- 1 avocado sliced
- 1 lime, quartered
- jarred mango or pineapple salsa
- fresh cilantro
- pre-shredded Mexican cheese

DIRECTIONS

Divide the rice, beans, corn, onions, lettuce, avocado amongst bowls.

Top with desired amount of salsa and cheese. Garnish with fresh lime, cilantro.

Easy Flexible Option: Add in pre-cooked grilled salmon or shredded chicken.

Nutrition Notes: Great for meal prepping and dividing into containers for school or work lunches!

APPLE, FIG & HAVARTI GRILLED CHEESE



PREP TIME

5 MINS

COOK TIME

5 MINS

SERVES

4

INGREDIENTS

- 8 slices thick rustic whole grain bread
 - 8 slices havarti cheese
 - 1/2 apple sliced thin
 - fig jam
 - regular or plant-based butter
-

DIRECTIONS

Pre heat a large non-stick pan.

Slather bread with a thin layer of fig jam, then divide the add cheese and apple slices amongst the sandwiches.

Close the sandwich and butter the outside of the bread.

Carefully, add the sandwiches to the hot pan and press down with a spatula or the lid of a heavy metal pot. Cook for 2-3 minutes per side until bread is golden and cheese has melted.

Nutrition Note: I love serving this grilled cheese with leftover soup or a simple salad.

GREEK SPINACH SALAD WITH COUSCOUS



PREP TIME

5 MINS

COOK TIME

10 MINS

SERVES

4

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups cooked couscous
 - 4 cups pre-packaged baby spinach
 - 2 tomatoes, sliced
 - 1 large cucumber, sliced
 - 15 oz chickpeas, drained
 - 1 cup pitted black olives
 - 2 oz. feta cheese crumbles
 - 1/2 cup diced red onion
 - 2 tbsp red wine vinegar
 - 1/2 tsp dijon mustard
 - 1 tsp oregano
 - 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
 - salt, pepper
-

DIRECTIONS

Make the dressing by whisking together vinegar, mustard, oregano, oil, salt and pepper to taste.

In a large salad bowl, add the spinach, tomatoes, cucumbers, chickpeas, olives and onions and toss with the homemade dressing. Sprinkle on the feta cheese.

Divide salad amongst bowls then add a scoop of warm couscous to each bowl and serve.

Easy, no cook flexible option: add jarred tuna or rotisserie chicken.

A top-down photograph of three white plates filled with a vibrant spinach salad. The salad is composed of fresh green spinach leaves, sliced ripe peaches with orange flesh and red skin, crumbled white feta cheese, and dark, toasted walnuts. Thin slices of red onion are scattered throughout. A small white bowl of dressing or seasoning sits near the top right plate. In the bottom left, a silver fork and spoon are placed on the table. An orange cloth is visible in the bottom right corner. A semi-transparent white rectangle is centered over the image, containing the text 'More Recipes' in bold black font, followed by the website address 'spoonfulofplants.com' in a black, underlined font.

More Recipes
spoonfulofplants.com

Download our [Flexible Plant Based Eating Guide](#) guide and learn how stock your pantry for quick and easy meals!

FOLLOW FOR MORE
DIETITIAN TIPS & RECIPES



DONNA CASTELLANO MS, RDN

WWW.SPOONFULOFPLANTS.COM

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY NOTICE

UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, THE DESIGN, CONTENT, AND ALL COMPONENTS OF THIS EBOOK ARE COPYRIGHTS OWNED BY DONNA CASTELLANO MS, RDN AND ARE PROTECTED BY U.S. AND INTERNATIONAL COPYRIGHT LAWS AND SHOULD NOT BE REUSED OR REPUBLISHED WITHOUT EXPRESS WRITTEN PERMISSION.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION DISCLAIMER

THIS EBOOK WAS DEVELOPED STRICTLY FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES. THE INFORMATION IN THIS EBOOK IS NOT CUSTOMIZED FOR ANY INDIVIDUAL AND IS PRESENTED WITHOUT ANY TYPE OF HEALTH ASSESSMENT OR KNOWLEDGE OF ANY INDIVIDUAL HEALTH CONDITIONS. THE INFORMATION IN THIS EBOOK IS NOT INTENDED AS MEDICAL ADVICE, MEDICAL NUTRITION THERAPY, OR INDIVIDUALIZED NUTRITION COUNSELING.